

562 ship among the women themselves is, moreover, less developed than in many other African societies.

● 178 The isolation and self-sufficiency of the Nyakyusa are diminishing rapidly, for considerable economic and political development followed the 1914-18 war. Coffee (first introduced by the German missionaries) has been developed as a native crop for 439 export, and the cultivation of rice (which had been fostered by 464 the British to provide food for their troops) has expanded. Gold-digging began some fifty miles beyond the borders of the Nyakyusa country, on the Lupa river, and there Nyakyusa men have found both employment as labourers and a ready market for much of their produce, so that by 1936 Rungwe district was exporting goods worth £24,000 annually.¹ In addition to this peasant production there are a small number of European estates producing coffee and tea for export.² We estimate the number of 1167 Nyakyusa working outside the district as migrant labourers at about 8,000 or 25 per cent of the able-bodied men. There were about 7,000 Nyakyusa men on the Lupa gold-fields in 1937,³ and a small number on the coffee plantations of Mbozi. These are all within a hundred miles of home; and the Lupa labourers return usually after two or three months' work. A considerable number of Nyakyusa are also at work on the sisal plantations of the coast, and employed as domestic servants or in other semi-skilled jobs through Tanganyika, who remain away for periods up to two or three years. Nyakyusa labourers are regarded by European employers as intelligent and capable of heavy work, but lacking in all the subservient virtues.

642 The system of Indirect Rule was established in 1926, and a consistent attempt has been made to develop a centralized Native 177 Authority for the Rungwe district. The traditionally sovereign chiefs of the Nyakyusa have been grouped in eleven court districts with one chief as president of the Native Court in each (see Map III); these eleven chiefs, together with the two presidents of the Ndali and Lambya courts, belong to a single federation, with an appeal court and joint Native treasury of its own. In the eleven Native Courts (which are courts of record) most of the

¹ Figure estimated on the basis of information supplied by the courtesy of the Agricultural Officer, Tukuyu.

² In 1938 the total area alienated was 26,000¹/₄ ac.; only 2,200 ac. of this was being worked.

³ Estimate of the Labour Officer on the 2¹/₄ upa, 4 June 1937.

ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

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Economic co-operation beyond the village has therefore increased enormously, and this is correlated with a decrease in economic co-operation within the village. The change is most obvious in the case of migrant labourers who, while remaining members of their villages (for they are domiciled there) cease, during the period they are at labour centres, to co-operate with their village neighbours in building, herding, hoeing and hunting; and those of their wives who accompany them are also withdrawn from village activities. 476

Of the men in paid employment within the district, some, such as house servants, police, hospital orderlies, and clerks attached to the Government station, are very largely withdrawn from economic co-operation in their villages; and even labourers employed on European estates, who still cultivate for themselves, and those who meet essential expenses by growing cash crops on their own account, co-operate less with their village neighbours than was customary in the old days. 476 464

As we have seen there is no village co-operation in the production of the main cash crops—rice and coffee—such as there was in the cultivation of three of the main food crops; therefore those who grow cash crops spend a smaller proportion of their time working with their neighbours than their fathers did. Moreover, the cultivation of cash crops encourages the development of hired labour at the expense of work parties attended by neighbours. In effect, the cultivation of cash crops involves less village co-operation than did the traditional cultivation of food crops, and in so far as men's energies are directed into producing cash crops, village co-operation becomes relatively less important. 241 476

We argue that while traditionally there was considerable co-operation in production between fellow villagers, that co-operation is diminishing, and its diminution is correlated with employment for wages and the production of crops for sale. The more educated the individual the more time he is likely to spend working outside his village, and the less he co-operates in economic activities with his fellow villagers. 476 178●

264 husband will not be angry; if he were, he would be mocked at:
562 "Did not your father provide marriage-cattle for this woman for
574 you that she might be the wife (*unkasi*) of us all?" Sometimes, when
the woman is cooking, her husband's friends come and take food
out of the pot before she has finished cooking. When she protests,
saying it is not yet cooked, the men say: "It is your work to cook,
ours to eat." Then when her husband comes she tells him that
so and so, and so and so, have eaten the food and there is only water
left in the pot. . . . But when her husband's friends begin to get
married they say to their wives: "That woman is really our wife!
Listen to her!" And she has honour among the other women, and
when they go to fetch firewood she walks with nothing, another
carries her axe and head-pad.' This account cannot be taken
literally—the first wife in the village does not provide *all* the food
for her husband's friends, who still eat at their mothers' homes,
nor do they have any sexual rights over her though they call her
'wife', but she must serve them as far as she can.

571 Sometimes, we were told, men's eating groups last a lifetime,
264 but often friends quarrel or move, and the group breaks up. 'Per-
578 haps one eats at midday and does not summon his friend, but only
calls him to the evening meal, then the other, who always calls his
friend to the midday meal also, is angry, saying: "He grudges me
food", and they separate. They just stop calling each other to eat.
Or sometimes one tries to seduce his friend's wife, and on that
account they separate.'

264 Eating with contemporaries is still considered right and proper
● 178 by Nyakyusa men, and it is generally practised by pagans, but the
old men say that youths are less ready to share food than formerly.
'This custom of eating together is dying.' Certainly in Christian
villages the practice has declined markedly. Many unmarried
Christians eat with their friends, but the majority of the married
men eat at home alone. Out of eight married men living in
Rungwe, for example, only two ate together regularly, and the
most educated group, the clerks, are notorious in the district for
their eating habits. 'People are much shocked at the clerks for
eating food alone. They say they are proud.'

264 Apart from eating regularly with certain close friends, well-to-
574 do pagan men are expected to entertain generously, inviting
fellow villagers to drink beer, or to a 'dinner party'—an ample
meal with delicious dishes, very carefully served—from time to

VALUES

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time, and providing meat feasts at funerals and at the initiation and marriage of daughters.

As it is proper for men to eat with their equals it is improper for them to eat with their juniors, or with women. In the past fathers and sons never ate or drank together. Nowadays they sometimes do so, even though conservative pagans, especially if the fathers and sons have been working together. Three reasons are adduced for the change: first, the example of Europeans and Swahili; secondly, the fact that the country is at peace and it is safe for all the men to drink together, whereas formerly, when there was constant danger of attack, the young men were forbidden to drink at all; and thirdly the fact that young men earn money and buy beer for themselves which they may invite a 'father' to share (*vide* Document p. 194). When the Nyakyusa drink beer they replenish the pot repeatedly with boiling water, and men expect to have the water boiled for them by a woman. As Mwambuputa explained, 'Sometimes my son brings his pot (of beer) to my place and calls his friends saying: "We will take the pot to mother's house and she will pour in water for us." Then they come to my place, and they invite me to drink, and I accept, and we drink together. How can I grudge my son beer when I have some? Did he and his friends not entertain me?' The change turns on the fact that a young man can earn money and buy beer for himself while yet unmarried. Formerly no unmarried man commanded millet for brewing. Now, when he is drinking in his father's homestead he cannot but invite his father to join him.

Women commonly eat alone with their young children and unmarried daughters. Sometimes co-wives who are good friends eat together, but they have no obligation to do so, and in a big homestead perhaps only two wives will eat together and each of the others eat alone. More usually a woman sends a dish of food to each co-wife to eat in her own hut. For a woman to eat food with a man is considered quite impossible. In those families in which men no longer ate with neighbours one or two ate with their young sons, but we heard of none who ate with their wives. The example of Europeans did not influence them to this extent.

It is admitted that women also enjoy company and profit from it, and it is considered good that they should get on with their fellows, but there is no suggestion that it is a woman's duty to

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i. *Constitutional form*

Two other negative points are worth noting. First, the Nyakyusa fought among themselves and honoured a brave warrior, but they never developed a military kingdom, nor did they regard battle as the chief end of man. Emphasis on the value of war is not, then, a necessary concomitant of a developed age-organization, as a study of the Masai, Zulu, Swazi, and Pedi material might suggest. Secondly, the constitutional division of a chiefdom once every generation is not dependent upon the age-village organization, for such a division was common enough among the southern Nguni whose age-organizations were of relatively small importance. Among the Pondo and Xhosa the 'great son' and the 'right-hand son' of a chief very often both became independent; the main condition of their separation and independence being that there should be ample land in which they might live, each with his own followers.¹ Nyakyusa chiefdoms could divide in each generation because the Nyakyusa were an expanding population in relatively empty country.

j. *Necessary conditions of age-villages*

The limitations of the connections we have attempted to show must be realized. None of the characteristics cited are *correlates* of age-villages, for in each case either the age-villages could exist without them, or they could exist without age-villages: e.g. fathers- and daughters-in-law could not avoid one another completely if they lived in the same village, but the separate villages in which they live need not necessarily be age-villages; age-villages might be established though father- and daughter-in-law did not avoid one another; and so on. We claim only that these characteristics of Nyakyusa society which have been cited *partly* determine, and are themselves partly determined by, the age-village organization.

There are, however, certain other characteristics of Nyakyusa society without which age-villages such as we have described could not exist at all. The first of these is the redistribution of

¹ J. H. Soga, *Ama-Xosa Life and Customs*, pp. 25-40; M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, pp. 379-80.

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178 land in each generation. The territorial segregation of fathers and sons is directly dependent upon the shifting of the old men after the 'coming out' ceremony, without which the young men would not have sufficient land to establish themselves as a compact group on land adequate to support their growing families. Where no redistribution of land takes place, as on mission land and in the chiefdoms where the 'coming out' ceremony has been dropped, the territorial division between age groups becomes blurred within a generation.

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178 Redistribution of land in each generation depends upon two further conditions: the existence of ample land to support the population, and relatively little development of land. As soon as land becomes scarce those in possession of it are reluctant to agree to redistribution. It is significant that the most valuable land of all in Nyakyusa country—that in old craters—is *not* redistributed at a 'coming out' ceremony, but is retained by an individual until his death, and then inherited by kinsmen. And as soon as improvements are made in the form of planting long-term crops, or building durable and expensive houses, the difficulties of redistribution are increased. Nyakyusa land-law recognized the right of an elder who had moved, or of his son, to the bamboos and *imisunguti* trees he had planted (*vide supra*, p. 46). But such rights become much more complicated when it is not only an odd clump of bamboos or two or three trees which are at stake, but a large patch of coffee; or when, in place of the old-fashioned long hut (*ikibaga*) built with the co-operation of kinsmen and neighbours, there is a more substantial house with expensive doors and windows made by an expert carpenter. It has been shown that where individual rights over trees or other long-term crops are recognized, and such crops are planted on a large scale, individual tenure of land, as opposed to a temporary right of usufruct, tends to develop.¹

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178 Secondly, the solidarity of the Nyakyusa age-village, as of kinship villages in other African societies, is a function of a small-scale society. Fellow villagers have been hitherto, and are still in a large measure, dependent upon one another for land, for aid in economic undertakings, for sympathy and good fellowship, and for protection 'by night and by day'. But such mutual dependence is visibly decreasing. In the economic field co-opera-

¹ C. K. Meek, *Land Law and Custom in the Colonies*, p. 28.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN AGE-VILLAGE

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tion is already as important beyond as within the village, and village control over the main cash crops has not been established, as it was over certain food crops. With increasing centralization the village headman, embodiment of the solidarity and relative autonomy of each village, is losing power to the chiefs and courts, on the one hand, and to the specialist agriculturalists, school teachers, elders, and ministers of religion on the other.

Friendships beyond the age-village are fostered by common experiences at a boarding school or a labour centre, and by common interests as members of a church or a coffee co-operative which does not necessarily include fellow villagers. And most important of all, fellow villagers are not bound to one another in resistance to external dangers as they were formerly. Lion, leopard, and buffalo still exist in the district, but we heard of no recent case of a village combining for defence against dangerous (as distinct from destructive) game: if action were necessary a European sportsman was usually glad of the chance of a bag. With the cessation of cattle-raiding and inter-village warfare, the curtailment of the right of self-help, and the development of courts with power to enforce judgement in cases involving members of different chiefdoms, dependence on fellow villagers for protection from material dangers and the responsibility of a village for the actions of its members, virtually cease. A sense of dependence upon neighbours for mystical protection lingers, but as elementary education, belief in Christian dogma, and the solidarity of Christian congregations increase, this supposed dependence upon the *amanga* or mystical power of neighbours also lessens. Many men who fear sorcery (including poisoning) do not fear witchcraft, and it is only against witches that neighbours are believed to protect one. Thus change in the form of beliefs is correlated with the development of more intense relationships beyond the village.

An age-village organization is probably dependent upon isolation in another fashion also: by their own account the Nyakyusa feeling that close association between successive generations is improper has been blunted by the example of Europeans and Swahili who do not share this feeling (*vide supra*, p. 69). The missionaries teach that avoidance between father- and daughter-in-law is unnecessary, if not in itself sinful, and the implication is that only 'superstition' maintains the taboo (*vide*

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621 *supra*, p. 84). The Nyakyusa pattern of avoidance has undoubtedly influenced that of the small groups absorbed by them, 177 but they in turn have been influenced by these groups, and by the 784 example of Christians of neighbouring tribes. In Ilolo avoidance 178 between father- and daughter-in-law is much less strict than in Selya. This was attributed partly to the influence of neighbouring small groups of Nyika and Penja, who had not the same tradition of strict avoidance as the Nyakyusa, and partly to the influence of the Christians, whose number was proportionately greater in Ilolo than in Selya. As Nyakyusa informants argued: the pagans see Christian women disregard avoidance taboos, and they see that nothing dreadful happens to them (as the result of their neglect), so the pagans, too, begin to think that avoidance is of no importance.

621 The relationship between the generations is also modified 561 among the Nyakyusa, as among other African people, by the 178 power of young men to earn money and so command wealth. As we have seen, sons are in a position to *invite* their fathers to drink beer in the father's own homestead. Once fathers and sons have begun to *ukwangala*, drinking beer together, and once the horror of a woman seeing her father-in-law has diminished, then there is much less insistence on the need to buttress separation of the generations by territorial segregation. When convenient, fathers and sons will continue to live apart, but if a building site and arable land near his age-mates is lacking a son may suggest that avoidance does not really matter after all, and his father (if a Christian or a sceptic) may agree to the son building near him.

621 Nyakyusa age-villages still flourish, but they are hardly likely 561 to survive many decades with increasing pressure on land, the 178 planting of coffee and other long-term crops, the development of trade and migration, and a diminishing isolation from the ideas and values of the outside world. Age is no longer the sole basis for village grouping in Rungwe district—common belief and common occupation now provide other grounds for building together. There are Christian villages, an administrative station, a military station, and trading centres such as Mwaya, the Lake port. Tukuyu (the administrative centre) has its police lines, quarters for hospital attendants, traders' quarters, and so on, 000 while Masoko has soldiers' and traders' quarters. This account of age-villages may therefore have some significance as a docu-

pieces of ground above others. We must now pass to the third great determinant of the system of Nyakyusa land-tenure—the form of their society.

4. THE FORM OF NYAKYUSA SOCIETY

178 When we speak of "Nyakyusa society" to-day we refer to one small area within a world society, to a group of men distinguished from the rest of the world by the possession of a unique cultural idiom of their own but none the less bound to it by the strongest ties. Two generations ago Nyakyusa society was, unknown to our grandfathers, almost a world in itself, a world moreover which was split up into a number of tiny units in the shape of independent chiefdoms whose relationships with one another were of the loosest kind. The sons of men for whom society (that is effective relationship) was normally confined to two or three thousand families, all or nearly all consisting of personal acquaintances, now find their own destinies inextricably entangled with those of 1,600,000,000 people. To the Nyakyusa of to-day fluctuations in the world price of gold and coffee, the policies and incomes of the missionary Churches of Europe, the political relationships between Great Britain, her Dominions, the League of Nations and Germany are matters of some importance.

Nyakyusa society at the present moment thus includes a number of complicated relationships between the Nyakyusa group and the outside world which, in the recent past, had no existence at all. And the presence of these new relationships has profoundly modified the social forms which traditionally obtained within the group itself. And as, with the spread of Christianity, Islam and civilised education, with the increase of skill and wealth and with the taking of new responsibilities, the Nyakyusa participate ever more and more fully in the life of the world society, so will their relationships with one another continue to change in form. For they still have upon them a primitive stamp, they still to some extent proceed from assumptions of isolation.

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423 The relationships of Nyakyusa society to-day fall into four main categories. There are, firstly, relationships of blood, marriage and affinity, secondly there are the various bonds of village life, thirdly there are those which subsist between members of the same chiefdom and, finally, there are those which bind the Nyakyusa to still wider groups, to the tribal group, the Territory, the World. And these relationships, as they are limited and defined, amongst other things, by rules of land-tenure, so also are they among the sources of these rules. Land is held in society and the form of society largely determines the manner of its holding.

the wealth derived from this trade enabled one of their chiefs, Kyungu, 648
to maintain himself as paramount over all Ngonde. Among his people 184
impersonal relationships thus had a greater importance. And it was, I
believe, the historical isolation of the Nyakyusa from any considerable
commercial contact with the outside world which prevented the rise
among them of a paramount chief.

To-day the Nyakyusa are in process of integration with the civilized 178 ●
society of the world and the independence of their minute chiefdoms has 622
inevitably passed away. The traditionally sovereign chiefs have been 692
grouped in seven court districts with one chief as President of the Native
Court in each ; and these seven chiefs together with the two Presidents of
the Ndali and Lambya Courts are federated, with an Appeal Court and
joint Native Treasury of their own. In the seven Native Courts most of
the traditionally sovereign chiefs are entitled to sit with their great-
commoners, and assist the President and his great-commoners in the
hearing of cases. The bulk of the legal business previously transacted
by each chief in his own country is now taken to Court, but the power of
great-commoners to settle disputes by arbitration in their separate villages
is still the basis of the legal system.

A poll tax, now (1938) fixed at 9/- per annum for adult males with no 651
additional tax for plural wives, has been introduced and chiefs are paid 622
small salaries ranging from 5/-, 10/- or 20/- a month for ordinary chiefs to
80/- or 100/- a month for the Court Presidents.

The Nyakyusa, as we have previously mentioned, consist of a number 563
of immigrant groups who have spread among and incorporated an indige-
nous population. The main immigrant groups were three in number
and are distinguished to-day by the names of " Nyakyusa," " Kukwe "
and " Selya." As all these three groups together (including those who
are now incorporated in them) call themselves " Nyakyusa " to the outside
world, I distinguish the one group to which the name more particularly
belongs as the " Nyakyusa proper." The Nyakyusa proper live in the
plain of Mungonde and up on the higher ground as far north as Tukuyu,
the Kukwe live north of them around the base of Rungwe Mountain while
the Selya live in the east of the district, between the Nyakyusa proper
and the Kukwe, right under the wall of the Livingstone Mountains.
Between the three groups there are minor differences of dialect and custom.

The extent to which the indigenous groups retain any separate
identity varies in accordance with the number of the immigrants and the
date at which they reached them, but over a large part of the district
fusion has been complete.

We have already discussed the economic relations between the 471
Nyakyusa and the Lupa gold fields which provides them with a market

may call in against her husband, if she desires divorce. And, it is hinted, 421
this particular force may sometimes be successfully invoked by a 626
plausible woman even without good cause.

In disposing of the surplus of their crops and bananas the respective 421
rights of a married woman and her husband vary in detail, though little 593
in substance, according as he has or has not made a formal division
between them. It is not infrequent for a man to reserve for his own use
one or two plots and some banana stems, which are then called *busongo*
plots or bananas (*imbaka* or *ifjinja fya busongo*). In the planting, weeding
and reaping of the *busongo* plots all the man's wives co-operate if he has
several, but the final product is absolutely his own, it is stored by him and
they have no part in it. Conversely, however, the rights of each woman
to dispose of the surplus crop of the plots allotted to her are thereby greatly
increased, for her husband cannot then touch it at all.

In any case, whether or not *busongo* plots and bananas have been set
aside, a woman's obligations to provide food for her husband's con-

authority can possibly either act over the whole area or command general
approval and support for its actions.

But in primitive society it is otherwise. In a small and isolated group
largely composed of personal acquaintances it is difficult to escape from one's
friends; while the facts of every dispute, of every breach of law, are soon
widely known; and in consequence, it is there perfectly possible at times
for legal sanctions to be effective without the intervention of any central
authority at all. The neighbours, or the kinsmen, or the affines of a
lawbreaker are in themselves a large and important section of his society, and
he can only with difficulty escape their authority; he can not lose himself in
a great city as can his civilised counterpart. And so the typical method of
legal procedure in a primitive society is for action to be taken against a law-
breaker by those more nearly concerned, supported by general public
approval. And it frequently happens that the only effective action is taken
singlehanded by the injured party; nevertheless if that action is supported
and strengthened by any generally expressed approval we can not deny that
it possesses a legal form.

In a primitive group any request which an individual may make to his
kinsmen or neighbours for practical assistance against a lawbreaker,
any appeal to their opinion in a dispute is a legal procedure, for it is an
appeal to authority. It is they upon whom he is in practice most depend-
ent. Nor is it only in "private life" that he depends upon them, for,
owing to the smallness of the group, the distinction between "public" and
"private life" hardly exists. In many situations they hold in their hands
the whole force of his society; their actions and opinions are checked or
supported by the informal but nonetheless effective jury of widespread
public discussion; and if they are against him he has nowhere else to turn.

Now Nyakyusa society to-day is no longer isolated and primitive,
neither has it yet fully taken its place in the social system of the world; it
is in process of transition. Legal procedure is, quite inevitably, becoming
everyday more and more an affair of the central territorial authorities, of the
Governor in Council and the High Court of Tanganyika and of their
appointed deputies: the local Magistrates, the District Officers and the
Native Courts. But the process is not complete. In many situations of
social life the new impersonal relationships with the great world are still,
for the moment, more or less irrelevant and in them the old primitive
sanctions retain their power.

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423 are used for house building, while the *syunguti* produces a fruit (*indilolo*)
824 which is both delicious to eat and also full of seeds which are dried, and
crushed for ointment (*inyemba*). Of the two trees the bamboo is the more
valuable.

423 Now among the Kukwe and Selya groups rights in these trees are
425 somewhat similar to rights in the valuable crater plots. When a man
621 moves, his bamboos and *syunguti* trees, unlike his bananas, do not revert
to the villagers; normally they continue to belong to his nearest kinsman
in that chiefdom, who cuts and uses the bamboos and picks the fruits of
the *syunguti* trees. If the villagers give the site to another man then the
newcomer has no rights over these trees unless the kinsman himself gives
them to him. But it sometimes happens that, where only *syunguti* trees
and not bamboos are involved, the kinsfolk do not bother to exercise their
rights; then the trees are treated like bananas, picked by the neighbours
until a newcomer is given that plot, and then by him.

423 If however, among the Selya and Kukwe groups, a man moves
425 leaving no kinsfolk near at hand, then the chief (*umalafyale*) as the supreme
622 overlord has a right to his trees, and if they are near the chief's own place
this right is exercised; he cuts and uses the bamboos and his wives pick
the *syunguti* trees. If another man is given the land by the villagers to
build on then he goes and asks the chief to allow him some of the *syunguti*
trees, and his request is usually granted, the chief gives him two or three
of the trees, keeping two or three for himself. But the bamboos, being
more valuable, are usually kept altogether by the chief. If, however, the
ownerless trees are at a distance from the chief's place then he normally
does not trouble to claim the *syunguti* trees but only the bamboos. The
former are at first picked by the neighbours and later given by the villagers
to a newcomer together with the site. And, even with the bamboos, if
they are a long way from the chief's place a "good chief," they say, will
allow the newcomer to cut some of them without payment; but it is
wholly within the chief's power to keep them all for himself if he wishes,
and "bad chiefs" do so. Furthermore a chief does occasionally also
exercise his right to claim an ownerless *syunguti* tree at a distance. If
one of his wives comes and complains to him that she has no *syunguti* tree
of her own, then he takes her to a site from which someone has recently
moved leaving ownerless trees behind and there he gives her one of the
trees; the rest he leaves as usual to the villagers and so to the newcomer.

423 Bamboos are men's property and only a man can claim them but
621 *syunguti* trees can be claimed by a kinswoman, a sister or a daughter, of
the old owner if none of his near kinsmen have troubled to do so.

423 We must here take note of a most significant modern development.
178 In the old days rights in trees could only be exercised by members of the

same chiefdom in which the trees were growing ; for between chiefdoms an actual or potential state of war always existed, and a man coming from a hostile group to claim property would have been driven away violently. But to-day under European rule it is now customary for a man to cut his own bamboos, if he is living in a neighbouring chiefdom, instead of leaving them to his resident kinsfolk. The group within which property can be held is gradually widening.

Such is the custom among the Kukwe and Selya groups ; their rights in bamboos and *syunguti* trees are not normally lost when a man moves provided there are kinsfolk left nearby to exercise them. The one exception to this rule is in the case of expulsion for witchcraft or other serious crime. Then even if the man expelled has left kinsfolk behind him, still the chief takes his trees.

Among the Nyakyusa proper, on the other hand, the *syunguti* trees are treated like bananas. When a man moves he loses all rights in them and, unless the chief steps in to take them, as he always may, they are granted by the great-commoner, together with the soil, to the newcomer who is put on that site. Bamboos, as in Selya and Kukwe country, continue to belong to the kinsman of the man who has moved.¹

Trees introduced by the Europeans, of which coffee trees are the most valuable, have been declared by the Federation of Chiefs to be the property of the planter, even although he has moved to a different chiefdom. This law was made after much anxious discussion between the chiefs, the Administration and the Agricultural Department and is, of course, subject to revision if it is found after trial to be impracticable. In the case of coffee it has inevitably been modified in practice since coffee must be tended continuously if it is to remain free from pests and to bear fruit, and any man who actually looks after coffee trees has a generally admitted claim to the crop unless he is paid by the planter for his labour. The planter, however, in surrendering the trees to him may compel him to pay something for their initial value.

Further, as the Agricultural Officer has the right to uproot any untended coffee trees and must exercise it if pests are to be kept under control, the practice has grown up of his taking over any large number of abandoned trees and keeping them clean with labour paid by the Native Treasury ; the trees are subsequently sold to some other man and the proceeds paid into the Native Treasury again. If, however, a planter of coffee trees makes arrangements, when he moves, for the cleaning of his coffee then the trees remain his own.

¹ Some informants deny this and insist that they always pass to the chief. I was not myself long in Mungonde among the Nyakyusa proper and I lack conclusive evidence on the point.

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Nyakyusa

THE LAND RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS AMONG THE NYAKYUSA 49

paid out of the Native Treasury from the taxes, rarely exceeds 10/- a month it may be doubted whether modern conditions are not in this, as in other respects, impoverishing the Nyakyusa chiefs.

A chief had the right traditionally to evict any man he pleased if he desired his site for his own personal use, giving him another in exchange. But this right is no longer effective: "It is now at an end," as a chief's kinsman told me, "for the man evicted will go to Tukuyu (the administrative capital of the district) and complain that his chief is turning him out of his home without good cause." It is however still perfectly possible for a chief to take any *unoccupied* site he pleases without reference to the local villagers. He may take it for himself or he may give it to a kinsman, and no objection to such an action on his part is ever raised. It is only if he gives it to an ordinary commoner that his people will criticize him.

Land once held by the kinsman of a chief at the latter's gift is more secure to him than any land can be which is granted in the ordinary way by a great-commoner; for no one but the chief himself can ever finally take it from him. If he moves and the villagers wish to give the site to a newcomer then they must either send a message after him and ask his permission to do so or else get explicit permission from the chief, if the newcomer's title is to be in any way secure.

A case within my own knowledge well illustrates these points: Mwakobela, half-brother of chief Mwaipopo, had been given land in the village of Ipoma by Mwaipopo himself. Subsequently he had moved to Kibonde, a minor chiefdom under the jurisdiction of Mwaipopo, and had spent many years there; and when I first met him he was living there still. But then he fell sick and, suspecting witchcraft, decided to return to Ipoma, only to find his old building-site occupied. For the great-commoner of Ipoma, thinking he had moved for good, had given it to a newcomer.

This grant of land to the newcomer had been irregular in more ways than one: firstly Mwakobela's permission had not been asked, secondly no reference at all had apparently been made to Mwaipopo, who subsequently denied any part in the grant and, thirdly, the great-commoner had not even consulted his fellow villagers; if he had done so they would, so one of them told me in discussing the case, have reminded him of the necessity of first asking Mwakobela's permission. The newcomer however had been given the site unconditionally and when Mwakobela reclaimed it he refused to move; but the rights of Mwakobela were unquestionable and he had no difficulty at all in getting him evicted.

I went to visit Mwakobela a few weeks after he had taken possession of the site and he told me about the eviction: "I approached the great-commoner and asked him who had given Mwangesisye (the newcomer)

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425 him if it was his idea that the village should die out and leave him, the
622 great-commoner, without men? As he had moved, the great-commoner
624 would have continued, the place was presumably distasteful to him and
it had now been allotted to another man. The claim would certainly
have been disallowed!"

425 The examples in this paper have been taken almost entirely from
797 pagan families. For Christians the situation is very much the same
427 except where they live actually on mission land, there they are tenants of
the Mission concerned and pay rent to it. And Christians, wherever
they live, tend to be more stable in their occupation of land, since they
are not forever moving in fear of witchcraft.

7. CONCLUSION

178 I have striven in this paper to make the individual land-rights
423 possessed by Nyakyusa to-day intelligible to the European reader and to
demonstrate to him their determining factors. Of these factors the
following are the most important. The Nyakyusa were until recently an
isolated and primitive people and so bring with them into the modern
world a legal tradition based upon small social groups. This tradition is
being inevitably modified both in theory and practice under modern
conditions, but not out of all recognition; for they are still a relatively
isolated people and the system of indirect rule secures them, in general,
against arbitrary legal changes. Within their legal system individuals
have, as in any system they must have, certain precisely defined and
enforceable rights—among them rights in land.

Many kinds of land, however, are plentiful, though less so than of
old owing to the growth of population, the opening of new markets for
food and the recent introduction of ploughs. And this cheapness of land
is reflected at times in a lack of rigour in the enforcement of rights in it
which is unfamiliar to the European observer. Sufficient land for all is a
fundamental condition of Nyakyusa society in its present form, which
has no place for a landless man.

[66 And, finally, the habitual movement of men with their families from
69] one village to another to escape the witchcraft of their neighbours leads to
a constant transfer of homesteads and gardens and is the main cause of
difficulty in the administration of their laws of property in land and trees.
This difficulty is greatest in the case of the newly introduced coffee trees
which need continuous tending.

It is unusual for a sociologist to find such a simple problem¹ for analysis as this and it was not long before the answer was plain. The Nyakyusa, until a few decades before the coming of the Europeans, had been largely isolated from any vigorous external contacts; Ngonde, on the other hand, had been effectively related to the outside world for generations. The Nyakyusa actually possessed in the Lwembes, the hereditary chiefs of Lubaga, a line of spiritual paramounts or high priests, whose religious functions were remarkably similar to those of the Kyungus in Ngonde; but, poor and isolated as they were, they had never developed any secular paramountcy at all. The reasons for the greater elaboration of the traditional political system of Ngonde were to be found above all in the ivory trade and in the constant influx of immigrant groups.

And it further became clear that the prestige which the present Kyungu enjoys in the changed conditions to-day is due in large part to his having followed the mercantile traditions of his predecessors, mastered the business methods of the Scots, made a fortune, and then kept up his position out of his own private means.

2. THE CHRONICLE OF NGONDE (TO 1875).

In studying the present constitution of Ngonde and the profound changes now taking place in it, we cannot find any point of time at which the process of change began. In its present radical form social change in Ngonde arises from the ferment of a host of new social conditions imported by European missionaries, traders and Government officials. But the Arabs also brought change to Ngonde and before the Arabs the Ngoni, while before the coming of the Ngoni there is evidence to suggest that changes had arisen, on more than one occasion, in the normal behaviour of the men of Ngonde which were stimulated, not by any new contacts with the outside world, but simply by accidents of their own internal history. Social change in Ngonde, as far as we can see, has always been going on.

In this section the political history of Ngonde is described in outline from the its beginnings to the coming of the Europeans in 1875, in so far as it can be recovered from the oral tradition. In later sections a systematic analysis is attempted, first of the constitution of Ngonde just prior to that date, and then of the changes in it which have since taken place.

(a) THE EARLY KYUNGUS.

It is generally agreed that the ancestors of the Kyungus, the present hereditary chiefs of Ngonde, came from the Livingstone Mountains in

1 [The dissimilarity between the Ngonde and the Nyakyusa political systems. — Analyst]

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175 nga, one of the chiefs of Ngr-lenge, Kyungu in his stead. "They deposed Mwabulambo because, as they said, the country was once more at peace and so they should take a son of Mwakasungula again as the Kyungu." Mwakabanga was at first installed on the lake shore, but after the death of Mlozi he moved to the traditional capital at the foot of Mbande.

175 The demarcation of the interterritorial boundary between Nyasaland
177 and German East Africa (afterwards Tanganyika) cut across the area of Mbande's influence. The majority of the Lambya were separated by the boundary from their chiefs Nyondo and Kameme, while the Ndali who had, so it is said, previously sent regular tribute of ivory to Mbande, now became quite independent. And some of the more remote territorial nobles to the west were included in Northern Rhodesia.

One of the first acts of the new Government was to forbid the hunting of elephants without a license and thus at a blow the main traditional source of the Kyungu's revenue came to an end. Since then the numbers of elephants have been greatly reduced by European hunters, and only a few are left in the Ngonde of to-day. Taxes soon began to be collected, however, and small subsidies to be paid from them to selected chiefs and nobles.

175 Now Kyungu Mwakabanga, who died in 1904, after a reign of ten
178 years, "was the first Kyungu to sit with his people judging their cases; he appeared before them at his own homestead. None of his predecessors had done so, only the nobles of Ngonde had seen them." During his reign the Government suppressed the *valukuta*, on the ground that their methods were too rough, and gave him government-paid messengers instead. And it also forbade the poison-ordeal.

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After Mwakabanga's death the nobles of Ngonde chose Mwangalaba, a son of Malema, to succeed; and early in his reign there were other significant changes of custom. From his predecessors, as we have seen, when they journeyed through their country, all commoners save the very old had fled. The Kyungu was too terrible for ordinary men to look upon. "Not till the succession of Mwangalaba was this custom abandoned." And in the third year of his reign the custom of hoeing *milaza* lapsed, not to be revived till 1927.

Now, as it happened, Mwangalaba had a younger brother, Peter, who was a man of exceptional talents. Starting as a Christian teacher he then became a store capitao of the African Lakes Corporation and of various other firms, and later set up in business for himself with a chain of shops and made a fortune. And when Mwangalaba began to fail in 1912 Peter became his assistant and proved himself to have legal and administrative ability also. A failing Kyungu could not, as in former times, be killed and Mwangalaba lingered on until 1932. In 1927 it became necessary

to appoint a regent and, with the consent of the nobles of Ngondé and of Mwangelaba himself, Peter was appointed; and in 1932 he succeeded his brother as the Kyungu. He is still the Kyungu to-day. Both before and after his succession he has used his private fortune without stint to maintain his public position; and the historical accident of his personal ability and wealth has played a very large part in shaping the course of the political and social revolution through which Ngondé is passing. 175 178

It is Peter who has completed the emergence of the Kyungus from their religious seclusion at Mbande. He has, in the first place, abandoned all claims to divinity and, with them, all interest in the traditional prayers and sacrifices to his ancestors which the nobles of Ngondé still occasionally undertake. And in the second place, he has built his capital, not at Mbande with the nobles of Ngondé, but at Bwiba, half way between Mbande and the Government Boma at Karonga—a position symbolic of the new age.

The Government of the Protectorate at first applied a system of direct rule. In Ngondé most of the chiefs and ruling nobles were designated either as "Village" or as "Principal Headmen" and officially allowed to exercise executive duties. It appears that traditional rulers only were selected, though, theoretically, anyone at all might have been. The "Principal Headmen" included the Kyungu but he was not recognized as paramount over the others. "In 1924 certain modifications were made in their position, but it was officially stated 'that the new system is no way intended to revivify or perpetuate governance by Native chiefs.' Under the 1924 system 'Village' and 'Principal Headmen' still had executive duties on behalf of Government, but no authority to administer their people in their own right."¹ With the appointed headmen councils were associated consisting of "members nominated and removeable by the Government," and a similar district council was set up "to advise the District Resident in such matters as may come before him." 175 178 642

But in 1933 the system was changed to one of "Indirect Rule" or "Local Self-Government," by which the traditional political institutions of Ngondé were taken as the basis of administration. The Kyungu was now recognized as "Paramount Chief,"² with an appeal court and with five "Sub-chiefs"³ under him. Of these five Kilupula was one of the

¹ The quotations in this paragraph are taken from L. P. Mair's *Natives Policies in Africa* pages 114-116.

² In order to avoid confusion between traditional and modern titles I shall, from now on, use the former without quotation marks, the latter with them.

³ These five had all been "Principal Headmen" under the previous ordinance. Since our visit Kalonga, the senior great chief of Ngelenge, has also been made a "Sub-chief."

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642 great chiefs of Ngana, three others (Mwenemisuku, Mwenewenya, and Nthalile) were distant territorial nobles who ruled groups of alien stock in the hills, while the last, Nyondo, who was, we remember, traditionally related to the Kyungu, ruled the Lambya group in the extreme north west. The nobles of Ngonde, together with twelve prominent territorial nobles and six other assessors, were recognized as members of the Kyungu's court and given nominal salaries. Those of the great chiefs of Ngonde who were not made "Sub-chiefs" in the new regime were now officially termed "Important Headmen," and given nominal salaries also. The other chiefs and those territorial nobles who had men of their own under them were still termed "Village Headmen" as they were before 1933.

The Kyungu and the five "Sub-chiefs" each had an area allotted to him, and each was given a court for his area. "Village" and "Important Headmen" might arbitrate in small cases, but had no power to execute judgments; that power belonged to the courts alone. Thus the Ngonde plain was split up into the two areas of the Kyungu (in the south) and of Kilupula (in the north). The Kyungu's court was both a court of first instance for his own area and also a court of appeal for the whole of Ngonde.

The modern title "Village Headman," seems at first to be a particularly confusing one since its bearer rules, not a village, but either a chiefdom or a fief which is itself sub-divided into age-villages. Further in the case of chiefdoms, unless they are very small, each age-village has its own great-commoner; and it is he who is the traditional village headman. But the confusion seems more natural when we realize the number of very small chiefdoms and fiefs which have now come into being by the continual sub-division of the former and the gradual shrinkage of the latter. There are some ruling chiefs and nobles to-day, still recognized as such, who have only half-a-dozen adult male tax payers under them. And it takes a pedantic anthropologist to see in such a group *two* age-villages! It is true that one does find the two or three old men in it still building a little apart from the three or four young ones, but most likely they are now all Christians and no longer observe the father-daughter-in-law taboos; for all practical purposes they constitute but one village-group. In the larger chiefdoms, however, the traditional articulation into age-villages each under its own great-commoner, still survives as a living fact.

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178 Like the Nyakyusa, but unlike many other Central African peoples, the people of Ngonde have a fairly easy adjustment to make to modern economic conditions. It is true that a large proportion of the able-bodied men, estimated by the District Commissioner in 1937 to be 25%, are now

always away, but the great majority of these go to the nearby Lupa Gold Fields in Tanganyika and return home regularly after short periods of three or four months at work there. Nor are they by any means solely dependent upon the sale of their labour for the money which is now necessary to them. Cotton and a certain amount of coffee, rice, beans, maize and beeswax are now being produced in Ngonde for sale to the outside world. Of cotton, the most important economic crop of this district, ninety tons were exported in 1936 and brought in, for distribution among the thousand men who had planted it, about a thousand pounds.

The question of the ultimate title to the land of Ngonde at various times since the coming of the Europeans has been the subject of dispute; but in actual fact only a little was ever alienated to European firms or individuals. These alienations were followed, in some cases, by a shifting of the African population off the land taken up, but not on any large scale. And since 1933 Native rights have been secured by law. There are now only three or four small estates occupied by Europeans in Ngonde.

In the constitutional sphere, again, a Native treasury has been set up into which one twelfth of the tax money is paid; but as this money is almost entirely used up in personal emoluments, the new treasury has so far little significance.

The whole scale and perspective of life is now changed. Ngonde is no longer a world in itself but a tiny province in a great empire. The Kyungu is no longer either a god or a sovereign, but a little secular chief visibly supported and controlled by the Nyasaland Government. Nearly half his people profess Christianity. A quarter of his young men are always outside Ngonde working for wages. Mission education in local schools and at the neighbouring central station of Livingstonia, opens to increasing numbers each year the knowledge of a vast new world. The primitive Ngonde was a world of personal relationships; only rarely were people much affected by the behaviour of any save their personal acquaintances. But to-day impersonal relationships are all-important in Ngonde; world markets, imperial policies and world history in general largely determine the behaviour of its people.

9. THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION OF NGONDE.

(a) CHANGE AND CONTINUITY.

The constitution of Ngonde in the middle period of its history consisted of a mercantile divinity superimposed on a number of relatively autonomous local groups. The central power was mainly determined by the two factors of divine kingship and the ivory trade: the local autonomy was mainly determined by the absence of any large number of

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642 permanent social relationships beyond the local groups of chiefdom and fief, and by the religious seclusion of the Kyungus. Now every one of these factors has today ceased to operate. And it is worth dwelling on this, for it follows that the constitution of the middle period has ceased to exist and something radically different has been developed in its place. Divine kingship and the ivory trade are dead, a host of complex and permanent relationships now covers Ngonde and links it to the outside world, the Kyungu rules his people in person, under Government. And the continuity which is aimed at by a policy of "indirect rule" is thus only possible in Ngonde to a very limited extent.

On the other hand, as some continuity is inevitable even through the most radical political change, so an acceptance by the Government of that inevitability is itself a factor of political order. It is far easier to rule Ngonde to-day through the Kyungu and the nobles of Ngonde than it would be, say, through a committee of commoners chosen for their personal ability; for the successors of the traditional rulers still have a status in Ngonde which is continuous, though not identical with that of the past.

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797 Christianity has gained a great hold on Ngonde,¹ and has helped to undermine the old pagan faith even among those who do not profess it. And the whole hierarchically organized system of pagan ritual is almost dead. A few days after our arrival in Ngonde, in July 1937, the nobles of Ngonde organized the clearing out of the ashes, for a special purpose. A bad plague of rats had appeared in the country and an old woman had announced prophetically that it was due to the anger of the spirits. Mulwa did all the organizing, for, as he said to us: "The present Kyungu renounced all interest in these things years ago and told me to manage without him. So I went and told Kalonga and Mwakasungula and Mwenengubwe, who is the senior of the chiefs of Ngana; it is their business to tell their juniors." But of the hundred odd chiefs and nobles in the Ngonde plain only four chiefs and a few nobles responded to the summons to put out their old fires and to bring the ashes to Kyimbwe. How many commoners put out their fires I do not know, for we did not hear of the ritual until it was over. Even this, however, was an exceptional occasion and the regular yearly performance of the ritual has ceased. Neither is the old first-fruit ritual any longer performed.

The Scots Mission in Ngonde concentrated from the first on the conversion and education of the sons of leading men, so that now many of the rulers themselves are either Christians or ex-Christians. The present Kyungu was, as we have seen, a Christian, and, though he has

¹ 45% of the population profess Christianity.

178 now abandoned his Christianity and taken a number of wives, he appears
771 to be wholly sceptical of pagan beliefs. "It is I who have killed the
797 custom of praying in the sacred groves," he told us, "for my brother, Mwangalaba, used to give the nobles of Ngonde cattle for sacrifice; but I have never once given them a beast, nor do I give them hens, nor beer, nor flour." He subsequently admitted, however, that he did sometimes give them "a few pence" to buy a hen for sacrifice. Many of the old magical taboos he certainly no longer observes and we have no evidence that he observes any; while the magical possessions of his predecessors are mostly lost.

That the old beliefs survive in the minds of many men in Ngonde, both pagan and Christian, we have certain evidence; but upon those beliefs little public action is now taken. The profession of Christianity is normal among the younger people, and their attitude to the ritual which occurred during our visit was one of amusement. And even the belief in witchcraft, which has proved in many parts of Africa to be most persistent, is beginning in Ngonde to be publicly called in question by some of the pagans themselves.¹

178 The present Native rulers of Ngonde are thus no longer generally
771 believed to control the destinies of their people; rain, health and fertility are no longer in their gift. And this brings radical changes into all political relationships. It is by their secular functions alone that the present Native rulers stand or fall. The hoeing of the public gardens of the Kyungu by his people, for instance, was largely kept up in former times because of his rain-making powers; he gave them rain, they gave him service. But, if he is now still able to claim this service from them, it is because he gives them other things than rain.²

178 Then again the decline of the old beliefs inevitably alters the balance
642 of power between the different political authorities. The Kyungu is no
771 longer a magical object carefully secluded and controlled by the nobles of Ngonde; and so he now rules his people in person. It is he himself who now takes all the major decisions, within the sphere of responsibility allowed him by the Government. The nobles of Ngonde are reduced to a merely advisory status. While the decline of the old theistic and witchcraft beliefs brings a similar change into the relations of every chief with his great-commoners. Many chiefs in Ngonde still fear that they will fall ill if they offend their great-commoners, but some do not,³ and it

¹ The same cannot be said of the Nyakyusa, among whom, for various reasons, the missions have made far fewer converts in proportion to the total population. Among the Nyakyusa the old rituals and beliefs are still very much alive.

² *Vide infra* p. 80

³ One of the chiefs, for example, is an ordained minister of the Church of Central Africa (Presbyterian).

is generally admitted that all chiefs are less affected by this fear than they used to be. The secularization of the constitution tends, in this connection, to make it more autocratic.

On the economic side it is difficult to exaggerate the change in the relative wealth of rulers and people. The change is temporarily obscured by the historical accident of the present Kyungu's personal fortune, but this, when he dies, will go to this own heir, not to his successor in the Kyunguship. The Kyungu's total official salary in 1937 was £72 a year and those of the "Sub-chiefs" varied from about £4 10s. to £12 a year. The nobles of Ngonde all received either 10s. or 15s. a year, with the exception of Mulwa who received 30s. These salaries, which are paid out of the Native Treasurers, are the modern substitute for the profits of the ivory-trade, which the Kyungu shared with his subordinates, together with the regular tribute of food and the proceeds of tribal warfare and of punitive expeditions, all of which sources of income have now dried up. And these salaries do not make possible the giving of any valuable gifts to subordinates and subjects. The local rulers also receive slight financial subsidies from the Native Treasury. Each "Village Headman" is allowed to retain 3d. from the tax of every adult male subject of his own and the "Important Headmen" (great chiefs) receive in addition subsidies ranging from 5s. to 40s. a year. This custom has replaced that of the requisitioning of food; but, owing to the smallness of all the present chiefdoms and fiefs of the plain, few "Village Headmen" receive more than £1 a year from this source.¹

It is open to commoners, on the other hand, to become as rich or richer than most of their rulers. The head clerk in the Boma in 1937 received £52 a year, and there were fifty-three other Government employees who all received £12 or over; Native Christian Ministers and Evangelists all received many times the salary of Mulwa while young men often returned from the Lupa gold-fields with savings of several pounds.

The decline of polygyny in Ngonde again reduces the relative wealth of the subordinate chiefs and nobles in comparison with their people. Women are increasingly reluctant, for various reasons, to be married by polygynists, and the old style of entertainment is changing. Few chiefs and nobles, save the present Kyungu himself, now have sufficient wives and unmarried children to be able to entertain on a large scale. In the case of ordinary chiefs and territorial nobles (the "Village Headmen" of to-day) this poverty is not in itself very significant, for with the dwindling

¹The average receipts of the one hundred and twenty-four "Village Headmen" in the Ngonde plain were almost exactly 10/- per annum in 1936. They had, that is, an average of forty tax-payers each.

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178 in size of the groups they rule, they have fewer subjects to entertain.
565 But the "Sub-chiefs" and the "Important Headmen" cannot cease to entertain largely without losing much of their pre-eminent status.

178 The outlawing by Government of civil and tribal war, combined
692 with the new economic and religious conditions, has enormously extended the normal range of social relationships among the people of Ngonde; and a centralized judicial system has necessarily been developed to deal with the new situation. The old forms of local autonomy have ceased.

178 The continuity which is observable between the present constitution
642 of Ngonde and that of the middle period is mainly determined by three factors. In the first place the Government of the Protectorate deliberately supports in positions of high authority the legitimate successors of some of the old rulers. In the second place the judicial functions of those successors, which have been greatly extended, have replaced, to some extent, the old religious and military functions. And, in the third place, the present Kyungu is, as it happens, a rich man. A decentralized mercantile divinity has been transformed into a centralized Native Authority with some continuity of personnel, with the substitution of new functions for old and with the assistance of a private fortune.

(b) *FROM GOD TO MAGISTRATE.*

178 The first two of these factors of continuity—Government support
642 and the increase of judicial functions—must be discussed together, for it is mainly because of their utility as subordinate magistrates that the Government supports the Native rulers of Ngonde.

Modern conditions, in the sphere of law, bring about two great changes. Firstly the integration of the one-time primitive society of Ngonde with the civilized world greatly increases the range of social relationships among its people, and so renders ineffective much of the traditional legal machinery. And, secondly, the introduction of Christianity, of political control by the British and of European economic enterprise inevitably changes the content of the law. Granted the general conditions of contact between Africans and Europeans in Central Africa a transformation of all its traditional legal systems is seen to be an inescapable necessity.

Common law must now be maintained by a hierarchy of legal authorities reaching far beyond the boundaries of Ngonde, if it is to be maintained among its people at all. As I write these words in Livingstone, a thousand miles by road from Mbande, there is a man of Ngonde working in a shop within a hundred yards of my office. While in Ngonde itself it is no longer true that a man's friends and neighbours, or even his immediate rulers, can ever be sure of constraining him effectively if he

breaks a law ; they must be able, if necessary, to call in the aid of some central authority or he will escape them. Many men today, for instance, take wives whose homes are fifty miles or more from their own ; and such marriages cannot possibly be regulated by the old primitive procedures. Moreover the rapid and radical changes in the content of law which are necessitated by modern conditions could not be worked out in detail by a number of independent courts without much confusion. And so in the Ngonde of to-day common law is maintained both by a centralized police system and by two central appeal courts, a lower one presided over by the Kyungu, a higher one by the District Commissioner.

A dispute which took place in 1935 well illustrates both the novelty of a central appeal court in Ngonde and the support which the Kyungu now receives from the Administration. And it also shows that the old rivalry between the lines of Ngelenge and Ngana still survives.

The Kyungu in his new judicial capacity decided a land-dispute between two local chiefs of the house of " Sub-chief " Kilupula, who is now the most powerful, though not the senior, of the chiefs of Ngana. The Kyungu's decision reversed that of Kilupula, who then became angry. The chief who lost the case is reported to have said : " How dare the Kyungu come here and divide up our land among us ? He knows nothing about it." And Kilupula is reported to have taken much the same view ; the new judicial functions of the Kyungu were resented by him. And Mwafongo, another great chief of Ngana, sympathised with his resentment.

Then Kilupula and Mwafongo between them wrote a letter addressed to the Provincial Commissioner complaining of the Kyungu's conduct of this case. The District Commissioner, who received it first, called them in and advised them to burn it, but they insisted that it should be forwarded. But before this was done the Governor of Nayasaland arrived in Ngonde on tour and the two chiefs then asked that the letter should be handed to him. And so it was. Whereupon the Governor publicly reprimanded them for writing the letter and asked the Kyungu, before all the people, to decide how he would punish them, by fine or imprisonment. And the Kyungu fined them each £5.

No more striking expression could have been given of the Kyungu's present position as a trusted servant of the Government than this incident. While the fact that the dispute arose out of his new judicial functions and that it was two chiefs of Ngana who stood against him is most illuminating. The Kyungu has exchanged the support of his ancestors for that of the Nyasaland Government, his divinity for a magisterial office. This change, on the whole, has been made easily enough, but a certain temporary friction was inevitable. The chiefs of Ngana are the tradi-

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692 tional rivals of those of Ngelenge ; most of the traditional reasons which led them to accept the supremacy of a Kyungu of the house of Ngelenge, whenever one was elected, have now ceased to influence them ; while they themselves, as we shall see in a moment, are now barred from the succession. Moreover the Kyungu's supremacy is now mainly operative in the unaccustomed sphere of law. And so a new reason for admitting that supremacy has had to be more forcibly presented to them than to the other rulers of Ngonde.

Once forcibly presented, however, the new reason seems to have been admitted in place of the old ones without much difficulty. For in 1936, the next year, Kilupula spontaneously led his people to the Kyungu and formally handed over a cow to him, thereby re-establishing friendship and mutual respect between the two of them. The dispute has ended in a manifest harmony.¹

It is relevant to mention here that in the first five months of 1937 only one case was taken on appeal from the Kyungu's court to that of the District Commissioner.

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692 The general status both of the great chiefs and of the local chiefs and nobles (the " Important " and " Village Headmen,") as also of the great-commoners, has been radically altered by the new legal conditions. Formerly these authorities were the mainstay of a primitive justice, but to-day they could not possibly enforce any legal decisions without the backing of the central Government. And this backing they do not have. Their sphere of influence is so small² that it has not been thought worth while to give them any formal judicial authority ; they are now mere arbitrators and all important cases go to court.

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692 The modern constitution of Ngonde is thus more centralized than the old. The support of the Government is given to, and effective judicial power is concentrated in the hands of half a dozen men, with their own advisers. The new judicial functions of the Kyungu and the selected " Sub-chiefs " have, in fact, been transferred to them from the local rulers. Some such centralization was inevitable under modern conditions but the details are dependent upon the decisions of the Government.

(c) *PETER THE FORTUNATE.*

643 The wealth of the present Kyungu is not only due to his great personal abilities. For twenty years before his appointment as Regent (when he himself became the Kyungu in all but name) he was the full-

¹ This phrase begs no questions about private feelings, upon which we have no evidence.

² This is less true of the great chiefs (the " Important Headmen ") than of the rest ; and possibly an understanding of their status will alter the attitude of the Administration to them.

178 The present Kyungu has gardens hoed for him like his predecessors,
 643 and these gardens are still called *milasa* ; but the subtraction of the reli-
 652 gious element from this custom has radically altered both its form and
 its significance. Of old the *milasa* were hoed by the great chiefs and their
 people because they wanted rain, to-day they go on hoeing them because
 the Kyungu gives them cattle ; of old they came of themselves fearing
 drought, to-day they come because he summons them ; of old the produce
 of the *milasa* was mostly used for the entertainment of guests from a
 distance, to-day the produce is mostly turned into cash and used in other
 ways for the maintenance of the Kyungu's position in his own immediate
 district. But still, as of old, the custom brings him honour.

The late Kyungu, Mwangalaba, is said to have refused to accept this
 traditional service in the third year of his reign (1907), and certainly for
 twenty years afterwards no *milasa* were hoed. Mwangalaba is said to
 have been a timid man, but it is also possible that he was forced to realize
 that the mere hope of rain would not be sufficient to maintain the custom
 much longer in the new economic and religious conditions ; he may have
 preferred to refuse his people's services rather than see them gradually
 refused to him. For he had nothing but the hope of rain to offer them ;
 he was a poor man ; he had neither the ivory of his predecessors nor the
 private fortune of his successor.

But in 1927 when Peter became Regent, the custom was revived on
 a new basis. The initiative apparently came from the great chiefs, six of
 whom in that year led their people to hoe *milasa* for Peter,¹ who, as soon
 as the hoeing was over, gave each of them a cow. Such a return gift was
 quite unprecedented. And now every year he sends a message to the
 three or four senior great chiefs, which they pass on to the others, telling
 them to come and hoe. One or two beasts are always given to each one
 who comes. In the first half of 1937 three great chiefs had brought their
 people to hoe *milasa* and to the two who had finished he had given
 respectively two bulls and a cow and a bull.

The bulk of the produce of the *milasa* he now sells to his people, by
 the basket, for money, using the money so obtained firstly to buy cattle
 to replace the ones given to the chiefs and secondly to buy cloths for
 funeral gifts. The figures which he gave us himself for the year 1927
 showed that he was able in that year to replace the cattle expended and in
 addition to buy £3 or £4 worth of cloths, enough for about a dozen
 funerals.² The custom has become a mildly profitable business enterprise
 for the Kyungu.

¹ But no such gardens, I think, are now hoed for the great chiefs themselves.
 Our evidence is here incomplete.

² Expenditure on cattle for chiefs = £11 or £12. Proceeds of sale of *milasa* crop
 = £15. Profit spent on cloths = £3 or £4.

But it is more than that, for its maintainance establishes a certain continuity of sentiment between present and past. By hoeing the Kyungu's *milasa* the people of Ngonde no longer do worship to an irascible divinity, but they still do honour to their greatest chief. "Where are our manners? Where is our respect?" asked the chief who, in 1927, took the initiative in hoeing Peter's *milasa*. "It seems almost as if they have died in us." And it is worth noting that the one who said this was Kajuni, a chief of Ngana.

Those who have read Richards on the Bemba constitution¹ will wonder how Peter manages at the same time to sell the produce of his *milasa* and also to provide the necessary entertainment for his leading men. The answer is twofold. Distances in Ngonde, in the first place are far shorter than among the Bemba, and the members of Peter's court can attend it regularly while sleeping and eating at home. The main traditional use of the *milasa* in Ngonde was to provide for the distant nobles who brought ivory and for the ivory traders themselves; but nowadays distant guests are rare. Nevertheless his subordinates and leading men are sometimes entertained lavishly by him, and his prestige in part depends upon this. Whether the necessary food and beer is actually taken from the *milasa* or from his private gardens I do not know, but the fact is unimportant as his private gardens are now big enough to provide the necessary surplus by themselves. For he is, in the second place, the possessor of about ten able-bodied wives who, no longer jealously secluded, work in his fields with their children; and he also hires labour to help them, paying for it out of his private fortune.

The nobles of Ngonde only rarely nowadays bring their people to hoe; for their relationship with the Kyungu is less profitable to them than it was in the days of the ivory trade, and the old organization of Mbande has decayed. With the removal of Peter to Bwiba the nobles of Ngonde and their followers began to scatter; only six of them now live at Mbande, with a mere handful of commoners. The other six are dispersed over the Ngonde plain, and only one of them² has any considerable personal following.

The requisitioning of food by the Kyungu and the local rulers has now almost ceased, for various reasons. Food can now be turned into cash by sale; and so men are far more reluctant to give their surplus to their rulers than before. Moreover I think that Government has disallowed the custom.³

¹ *Op. cit.*

² Ngosi, who ranks as a "Headman" with a few subjects of his own.

³ We did not investigate this point in Ngonde, but among the Nyakyusa it is certainly so.

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643 The present Kyungu maintains his position by a continual distribution of material gifts, as the Kyungus did in the past, but many of the details of this distribution are now altered. Besides the cattle which he now gives the great chiefs he also gives away far more funeral gifts than his predecessors. But on the other hand, the traditional distribution of cloth and ivory, after a visit from the ivory traders, and of slaves and cattle to those who brought tribute in food has now ceased. The traditional procedure of giving a newly elected noble a cloth still continues.

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764 Previous Kyungus only sent cloths to the funerals of the most important of their subjects—chiefs, nobles, great-commoners and a few others. But Peter sends a cloth to nearly every funeral in his own half of the Ngonde plain; though in Kilupula's half and in the hills he only sends cloths to the funerals of chiefs and nobles.

Nearly every family in his own half of the plain now sends a hen (worth 3d.) to Peter to announce a death and he returns a cloth (worth 2s, 3s. or 4s.) as a funeral gift. More important families (chiefs or rich great-commoners) from all over Ngonde send a bull-calf (worth maybe 7s. or 8s.) and to them he returns a cloth or blanket worth anything from 8s. to 12s. In 1934, a year with many deaths, he spent £57 on such funeral gifts and he can hardly have received more than a tenth of that value in hens and calves.

It is this custom above all which gives Peter the status of a paramount chief (as opposed to a subordinate official of the British Administration) in the Ngonde of to-day. And it is only his private fortune which makes it possible. The profits of the *milasa* never reach any such proportions, while, if he spent his official salary on funeral gifts, he would be quite unable to clothe himself, his wives and children.

Now the extension by Peter of the custom of sending cloths to funerals is significant both in relation to the new legal situation and to the present poverty of the other rulers of Ngonde. In his own portion of the plain Peter is the only Native judicial authority who can execute judgments, he is also the only Native ruler who can afford to keep up, on any large scale, the bountiful activities traditionally associated with chieftainship. And he has thus largely replaced the local rulers and the great chiefs, in relation to the common people, both as judge and as plutocrat.

Though we made no intensive study of the areas of the "Sub-chiefs," it is clear that they are not in a position to give any valuable gifts to their people, and that their prestige is in consequence far lower in their own areas than is the Kyungu's in his; they are but subordinate magistrates with traditional affiliations. Moreover the Kyungu, both through his appeal court and through the sending of funeral gifts to chiefs and nobles is still able to maintain his paramount position in their areas.

Owing to the accident of Peter's private fortune the elements which tend to make the present constitution of Ngonde more autocratic and more centralized than the old are, in his case alone, uncounteracted by the element of poverty. And his secular power is thus far greater in Ngonde than that of his predecessors. The nobles of Ngonde have lost the old religious holds over him, most of the subordinate rulers have lost their judicial functions, he alone is considerably richer than the common people.

Personal links between rulers, subordinates and subjects are not only characteristic of primitive societies. In our own society these links normally take the form of entertainment: The King, cabinet ministers, colonial governors, and the mayors of towns entertain the leading citizens, and their position in part depends upon doing so. And it is thus probable that personal economic links will still be necessary in the Ngonde of the future, when its integration with world society is more complete. Their form may change, but wealth will still have to be expended on their maintenance. Now there are only two ways of assuring that such links will be maintained: either special allowances must be paid to the Native rulers of Ngonde as they are paid to European rulers, to enable them to keep up their position in this way, or else rich men of public spirit must be found to fill these offices. The second solution depends upon the existence of rich men and the constitutional possibility of giving them office; but it is very unlikely indeed that, in the near future, other Peters will be available, who combine wealth both with royal blood and the general eligibility for which the nobles look. Moreover it is worth noting here that quite soon the majority of the Native rulers of Ngonde will probably be Christian monogamists and the old economic resources of polygynous marriage will then no longer exist for them at all. The first solution, however, always remains practicable.

(d) CONSTITUTIONAL LAW.

It is generally accepted in Ngonde to-day that all future Kyungus should be taken from the one house of Mwakasungula and all the three Kyungus since the deposition of Mwabulambo have been members of it. The nobles of Ngonde insist that the chiefs of Ngana were only taken in the middle period *faute de mieux*, when either no suitable chiefs of the Ngelenge line could be found, or it seemed to be dwindling dangerously under the onslaughts of the Ngoni. And the chiefs of Ngana accept this fact. Why the house of Mwambelo has fallen out of the succession I am not sure, but, as the house of Mwakasungula is now very numerous, I suppose it is not considered necessary to look beyond it.

But still the principle obtains of election within the house. From

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643 Magemo to Mwakabanga no Kyungu has ever been succeeded by his own immediate heir; the choice of Peter as successor to Mwangalaba was unique, for he was his full brother and the heir to his property, but then Peter's ability and personal wealth were unique also. And in the case of the great chiefs and the nobles also the principle of election is still followed.

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643 The grounds of election have slightly altered. Generosity and wealth are still important, but "wisdom in European ways" is now more looked for than maturity, and shortly before our visit a fairly young man was chosen as Mwakasungula. Bravery in war, of course, no longer matters.

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622 The Administration have so far made little use of any great chiefs except the three who are now "Sub-chiefs;" but the others (the "Important Headmen") could be made into effective local rulers, if their salaries were raised. The ordinary chiefs and nobles (the "Village Headmen") are too numerous and have too few subjects to be very effective links in the chain of modern authority. But many of the great chiefs command the respect of considerable numbers. Moreover the fact that they are already being elected for their "wisdom in European ways" suggests that they will prove competent to deal with modern problems.

The traditional secular procedure of election is still followed, with some exceptions: the nobles of Ngonde are now sent by the Kyungu to participate in the "catching" of the great chiefs of Ngana¹ on the spot; the District Commissioner is informed of the result of every election; while the Kyungu himself, no longer secluded, takes a bigger share in making the choices than his predecessors very well could. And many of the religious elements of the traditional procedure, such as the setting of a new Kyungu on the iron stool *Kijumbi*, have fallen out of use.

The sending by Peter of the nobles of Ngonde to catch the chiefs of Ngana is a sign of the present centralization of power in his hands under Government. When we asked why the old custom had been changed we were told that it was "because now everything is under the control of Government and comes to the Kyungu."

The gradual ousting by chiefs of the few ruling territorial nobles who still remain in the plain has continued in modern times, but the novel conditions have complicated the process and seem to be checking it. A recent quarrel between Kajuni and Mwenelupembe illustrates this. The head of the house of Kajuni, which is a junior branch of the

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¹ I think this is also true of the less important territorial nobles of the hills, but am not sure.

Mwenengubwe, has attained more or less the status of a great chief; but his country originally belonged to the noble Mwenelupembe. One of the Kajunis married a daughter of Mwenelupembe and, in the usual way, became the effective ruler of most of the country. But the position was not formally clarified, Kajuni and Mwenelupembe are said to have lived on the best of terms, "and there was no boundary between them." After the arrival of the Europeans Kajuni was recorded in the Government list as the "Headman," for taxation purposes, with the consent of Mwenelupembe. And this meant that Mwenelupembe received no share of the tax money. But then, recently, Kajuni sold some of their land to a European for a tobacco shamba without consulting Mwenelupembe, who was furious, and demanded his own tax register and to have a boundary formally marked out between them. And this has now been done. The present cash value of the status of a ruler has altered the economics of the situation, the decline of the religious status of Mbande lessens the comparative importance of the royal blood, while new occasions of dispute between the rulers are now present.

The "coming out" (*uvusoka*) has ceased in Ngonde owing to the smallness of all the present chiefdoms, both in area and numbers, and the impossibility of finding sufficient land and followers for two successors to any local chief.¹ There has been no "coming out" since 1913. Each local chief is now succeeded by one younger full-brother (or one son) alone. But still among these "Village Headmen" popular favour determines their position. If his subjects do not like a "Headman" they move away to his neighbours, and every emigration reduces his salary by 3d. a year.

(e) CONCLUSION.

Now the more autocratic form and the greater centralization of the modern constitution of Ngonde is very largely the product of inevitable social forces. Granted the general conditions of contact between Africans and Europeans in Central Africa, a decline of the religion of Ngonde, with the consequential change in the relations of chiefs with their leading commoners, could not possibly be avoided. Nor could the old local autonomy possibly be fitted in unchanged to any modern administrative system. And Ngonde is not unique in this, similar changes, equally inevitable, can be seen in most areas of Central Africa.

Nor is the relative poverty of the majority of the Native rulers of Ngonde today a unique phenomenon either. Richards² has shown the

¹ Owing to the climatic difference land is scarcer in Ngonde than among the Nyakyusa; but the implications of this fact we did not specially study.

² *op cit.*

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178 same thing among the Bemba and Read among the Ngoni;¹ and it is, in
642 fact, the wealth of Peter which is unusual. Wealth and chieftainship are
no longer normally synonymous terms as they were in the old days; and
this again is largely the result of the operation of inevitable forces.

And wherever an increase of centralization and of autocracy is combined with a decrease of the relative wealth of the Native rulers there the modern constitutions of Central Africa must inevitably become very difficult and, in the end, impossible to work. For a central political power cannot be effectively exercised unless it includes the control of wealth; nor can able and wealthy commoners be permanently barred from sharing it.

But the policies of the Government, backed by the overwhelming power and wealth at their command, are themselves social forces which, while they cannot prevent the other forces from operating, can counter-balance them. No Government, for instance, can maintain the old tribal religions in being against the forces making for their decay, nor can it now restore the old sources of wealth to the chiefs, nor can it prevent some commoners from becoming wealthy men, nor can it bring back the old small-scale, isolated, relatively autonomous, local communities. But it is possible for a Government to raise the salaries of chiefs and their advisers and deliberately to encourage new forms of local representation and popular control. It is possible; but whether it is desirable a scientist cannot say.

¹ Margaret Read. *Native Standards of Living and Culture Change. Supplement to Africa*. 1938.

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COMMUNAL RITUALS OF THE NYAKYUSA

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[721] north the Nyakyusa were continually at war; they did not trade or pray with them. Thus we conclude that participation in a common ritual is, in the Nyakyusa case, directly linked with a common origin and essential trade.

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[821] The divine kings, Lwembe and Kyungu, were regarded as having power over certain areas, a power closely linked with rainfall. Indeed, one informant argued that the chiefs living around Masoko had never sent sacrifices to Lubaga, 'because when it rains at Lubaga the rain does not come as far as Masoko'. He was mistaken in his facts—the chiefs of Masoko did at one time send to Lubaga as Mwambete (162), chief at Masoko, himself admitted—but the argument points to a conception of supernatural power tied to a rainfall area. This notion was not, however, applied consistently.

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● [178] The balance between secular and mystical power has altered during the past ten generations. The founding heroes, Lwembe and Kyungu, came as conquerors and must surely have led their men personally; but early in the history of Ngonde the Kyungu was secluded, and power was exercised almost exclusively by the nobles (*vide supra*, pp. 40-46); and the Lwembe also was, at one period, 'not seen by ordinary men' and led a life hedged about with taboos. There is sharp contrast in Nyakyusa tradition between the active chiefs who were warriors, and arbitrators, and worked hard in their fields¹ and the 'divine king' who lived in seclusion. As we have seen, the chiefs often delegated ritual functions, with the taboos involved, to a junior kinsman such as Mwamukinga (44) or Mwakihaba (45) (*vide* pp. 79-81, 114) whose heirs succeeded to the office. It is even possible that the first Lwembe at Lubaga (Mwakalebela 19) took over ritual functions from his senior brother, Kalesi (18).² The present tendency is for the development of secular power and its separation from mystical power. The Kyungu is no longer a god but an administrator: the heir of the Lwembes sits as an elected representative of chiefs on the Local Council. In the traditional Nyakyusa society ritual played an essential part in maintaining the balance between generations, sections, and social strata, and in

¹ In 1955 a young chief was bitterly criticized by his men because he 'never had a hoe in his hands' whereas his father and grandfather had (to our personal knowledge) been diligent in hoeing.

² But according to one excellent informant, Mwakihaba (50) lived secluded while Mwakihaba (31) 'led men'—i.e. entertained.

CHAPTER VII

CLEANSING THE COUNTRY

769 SACRIFICES to the heroes and the shades of the chiefs are holy and private—only a handful of priests and chiefs may enter the groves and the details of the rituals are not discussed with other people. But there are other celebrations in which everyone participates; these are the rituals for cleansing the community—786
783 'throwing out the rubbish' (*ukujola ikikungu*)—more specifically the ashes from all the hearths.

In Ngonde the cleansing is organized for the whole kingdom, from Mbande, but among the Nyakyusa each chiefdom acts independently. Traditionally, we were told, the *ukujola ikikungu* was an annual celebration, observed at the 'new year', after the break of the rains, but it could also take place if there were much sickness in the country, or plague, or prophecies of evil to come. It was celebrated (in an attenuated form and by a section of the community only) in Ngonde in July 1937, to cleanse the country of a plague of rats, and in September of the same year a somewhat similar ritual was performed in Porokoto's chiefdom because a

[787] fearful omen had been seen—a ground hornbill had eaten a chicken. The annual celebrations had been dropped both in

[178] Ngonde and BuNyakyusa before 1935.

As has been shown in the *Rituals of Kinship* the Nyakyusa believe [769] that too close an association with the shades is dangerous; all the family rituals are designed to drive them away, to drive them out [755] of the bodies of the mourners, or menstruating girls, or parents of twins; and the purpose of 'throwing out the ashes' in all the homesteads is essentially the same. The shades 'come to warm themselves' at the hearths of their descendants, they 'bring sickness to the hearths' and so the old ashes are cleared out and new fire is [775] lighted. The phrase *ukujola ikikungu* is used in Ngonde for clearing out the litter (*ulufumbo*) after a burial, or an initiation ritual, and for shaving after a ritual, as well as for clearing the ashes from all the hearths in the country.

[754] It is also thought that domestic fires are contaminated by [775] witches who may have cooked the human flesh they steal over their victims' own fires. In Ngonde it was the connexion between

787 clearly inclined to the shades as it had before the divination, but as
753 before the certain conviction was lacking.

[775] Four days later (12/2/37) Kasitile went to Nsesa in Kituli village
[769] to consult the oracle again 'for that of Nsoki went wrong'. He told us
afterwards "This oracle supported the finding of Ndembwe's. It said:
Your kinsman who is dead is angry; he says, "Why did you not
celebrate the ritual? I am tired of the hair (*Ngatele nayo inwili*). And
what did you offer your father after cutting that tree?" Here yet
another cause of Kasitile's illness is suggested—the neglect of the death
ritual of a kinsman. The implication is that the chief mourners have
[765] not yet performed the concluding rite of shaving which makes it
[302] possible for the deceased to join his fathers. The hair which the
mourners shave off is called 'the hair of the corpse'.

QUESTION: What are you going to do then?

[688] KASITILE: I shall charge the young man, son of my dead kinsman, with
[602] neglect, and tell him to celebrate the ritual that the shades which have
bound me may go out of my body.

QUESTION: And the bull?

KASITILE: If I can find one I shall kill it.

QUESTION: Who will be there?

[793] KASITILE: The priests will be there, Ngulyo, Kisogota, Njobakosa,
Mwalukuta and Mwakasukula,¹ and also Mwaipopo (116) himself.
Were I a commoner I should kill alone with my younger brothers, but
since I am a public personage (*ndi nkulumbe*) the village headmen are
there. (To Mwaikambo, the clerk.) It is good at your home in the
hills; here things are bad.

QUESTION: But they also have shades?

[775] KASITILE: But they are not important. Look you, I just cut a tree and
they have seized me and dwell in my body. Are there sacred groves in
[178] the hills? Do men visit them? There in the hills rituals have died; the
puberty ritual and the rituals of the groves are celebrated very little.

787 On 27th March Kasitile looked in to say that he was going to con-
791 sult a visiting Sangu doctor 'from very far off' about his cough, but
753 G.W. had better not come lest his presence spoil the divination.
Kasitile came again after the consultation, full of excitement. 'What a
doctor! That is a doctor indeed! That is a diviner! He took an axe
and divined with it; he took coppers which I brought and threw them
in a little pot, together with the axe, and ash, and he said: "You also
take ash and throw it in" and I did so. Then he looked into the little
pot and said: "You built on the plain!" He knew this without being
told! I said: "Yes!"

SANGU: There was a quarrel there.

¹ The last two are priests of Mbyanga (side p. 80) who did not in fact come. Mwanakunda, Kasitile's assistant, who did come is not mentioned.

182 Churches in the area. Nevertheless the bulk of professing Christians
 595 are monogamists, though it is still customary and, in Rungwe
 797 District, economically profitable, for a rich man who is not a
 Christian to have more than one wife. The difficulties of establishing monogamy are accentuated by the great disproportion in the numbers of men and women. If the figures available are accurate, a general acceptance of monogamy would mean that only about 70 per cent of the women could be married; therefore the Church is necessarily concerned in seeking an adjustment in the disproportion of the population—in keeping the men alive if our assumption that the shortage of men is due to a heavy male death rate is true.

182 The yeast of the gospel permeates still further. It is taken to
 797 imply the freedom of an individual to accept or reject a partner in
 584 marriage. This has been maintained from the first in the Nyakyusa Church, and is enforced by the courts, which apply a conception of personal rights springing from the Christian tradition.

182 Most Nyakyusa men attribute the rapid rise in the divorce rate
 586 to this new 'freedom' of women. Christian teaching stresses the
 797 family and the sanctity of marriage, but it ignores the lineage. In the traditional rituals of kinship the lineage is represented again and again, while in Christian ritual it is the elementary family and the Church that are pictured. The preoccupation with fertility and the reproductive cycle was linked with the glorification of the lineage itself, and it disappears when the lineage ceases to be the basis of social grouping.

182 How closely linked are symbols to other aspects of a society?
 181 Our hypothesis is that they are relatively free, but it can be shown
 178 that many of the symbols used in the traditional rituals of the Nyakyusa reflect the economy, and vary somewhat from one area to another, with the staple crops. The development of trade or of new crops is a prerequisite for using the symbols of bread and wine traditional in the Christian rituals, and even the 'independent' African Churches use new foods, not the beer and bananas of the country; thus change in material symbols and change in economy may be directly connected. The imagery changes also with the changing social structure; Kyala ceases to be pictured as a senior kinsman, when the lineage organization begins to weaken; he is God the father of a family rather than an early member of the royal lineage. But there is no evidence that

RELIGION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

221

particular symbols are tied to a particular social structure; the poet makes his choice within the whole range of the familiar.

The impetus to change has come both from the religious field and from the secular. For example, the pressure towards monogamy among the Nyakyusa has been religious; given plentiful land and cash crops additional wives are an economic asset, not a liability. In this respect the contrast with the Ciskei in South Africa, where families are dependent for food on wage-earners in towns, and no man can support two families,¹ is marked. On the other hand, the decay of Nyakyusa age-villages is primarily due to economic pressure, though it is facilitated by the insistence of Christians that there is no danger in father-in-law and daughter-in-law meeting one another. The first generation of Christians living on mission land built villages apart for their sons, despite the teaching that avoidance of a father-in-law by his daughter-in-law was foolish, if not sinful. But a radical change in pagan observance of ritual avoidance is brought about by the general practice of going out to work for long periods, and the competition for coffee and rice-lands, which makes the territorial separation of fathers and sons impossible. As we have shown, young men going to work commonly leave their wives in their fathers' homesteads, valuing the support and supervision given them there above the old stringency of avoidance and, where land is scarce and valuable, fathers do not move aside each generation to make way for their sons. Avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law continues only in an attenuated form. [606]

From German times control by a European government has compelled a modification of the traditional sacrifices to the heroes and of the ritual of chieftainship. How the Kinga priests came to Lubaga 'in secret' and how they failed to instal a new Lwembe after the death of Mwakisisiya about 1914 has been described. Killing a child to anoint a drum or make medicine for the fields, compelling a man to accept a dangerous office, killing chiefs because they are ailing, or plucking off their nails before they die; all these are actions which are held, and must be held, to be 'contrary to natural justice' by any Western government. Here the change in political organization compels a change in ritual and there is evidence that belief in the traditional forms is much diminished, though not dead. The European government also

¹ Keiskammahock Rural Survey. Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, by D. H. Houghton and E. M. Walton; vol. III, *Social Structures*, by M. Wilson et al.

222 COMMUNAL RITUALS OF THE NYAKYUSA

177 found the administration of the poison ordeal, driving out people
648 alleged to be witches, and killing supposed sorcerers 'contrary to
196 natural justice'. Here the change is not in the celebration of a ritual
but in the execution of 'justice' based on traditional religious beliefs.

177 The early missionaries were very important as employers of
177 labour and a market for produce; indeed at one time they were the
sole source of western trade-goods among the Nyakyusa. For long
they provided the only skilled medical attention. They were the
source of new learning, teaching, from the start, reading and
writing and new manual skills, and the link between learning and
religion, so familiar in the history of Europe, is still strong. There-
fore acceptance of Christianity tended to go along with acceptance
of the new economic and political structure, but it was never
identified with it. Already in the thirties a popular song contrasted
Christians with Europeans, and African nationalism was finding
expression in 'independent' Churches.

178 Secularism fits as well with the new economic and political
171 structure as Christianity, and it has been argued elsewhere that
648 one of the characteristics of the change from a small-scale, isolated,
self-sufficient people to a large-scale society is increasing secular-
ism.¹ The evidence from BuNyakyusa does not so far support this,
but there is a separation of religious and other activities. Religion is
not interwoven with the modern political system as it was with
the old. Traditionally the fusion between ritual and political
activities was almost complete; village headmen became priests
as they grew old, and chiefs became gods. Now there is a separa-
tion between Church and state, between Government and mission,
which co-operate closely only in the organization of schools. It is
true that Christian congregations pray regularly for 'those set in
authority over us', but for the most part religious ritual does not
enter into state functions. The flag is hoisted and saluted at
sunrise and sunset at administrative and military centres; certain
occasions, such as the Queen's birthday or the visit of the Queen's
representative, the Governor, are celebrated with secular cere-
monial. Only at the Coronation, to which African representatives
from Rungwe district were sent, did the state ceremonial and the
Christian ritual merge.² Political tension is not now directly

¹ R. Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, Chicago (1941); *A Village that Grows*, Chicago (1950).

² 'The entire solemnity of the Coronation, from start to finish, is distinctly a religious rite.' Canon Charles Smyth, 'The Coronation Rite', *The Listener*, 28th May 1955.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

223

expressed or resolved in ritual. The place for *uhusorya*—speaking out—is the council chamber not the sacred grove or the homestead where the shades gather, and the reconciliation of conflicts between chiefs, or between chiefs and District Commissioner or chiefs and commoners, is sought in a committee rather than a Church. Perhaps the greatest difficulty in modern administration in Africa lies in this very separation of activities, in the *thinness* of the bonds across the colour line, in the cleavage between secular and sacred. Some separation of the different aspects of a society is a concomitant of the increase in scale—it is one manifestation of specialization—but it is greater in Tanganyika with its diversity of religious traditions than it is in Britain with its common Christian history.

That there is a connexion between the form of faith and ritual and the form of social structure few would deny. The concern of the anthropologist is to define it; to plot the limits of autonomy between different aspects within societies. This can be done only by the patient analysis and comparison of many societies and this book is offered as a humble contribution towards such a comparative study.

10:Gulliver E-5 (1954-1955)1958 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

- 121 and try to understand the nature and reasons for change. Here, then, is a good opportunity for the study of social change – not only in land tenure as such, but also in village and family organisation, political authority and economic life.

II

- 101 The Nyakyusa are a Bantu people inhabiting the main part of the Rungwe District in southern Tanganyika, immediately to the north of Lake Nyasa. In 1948 they numbered about 199,000 in that District, but about 10,000 men were probably at the time temporarily absent from their homes and in employment in the mines and towns of the Rhodesias and South Africa (see Gulliver, 1957), whilst about 20,000 had migrated to live in the adjacent Mbeya District to the north.

- 131 The tribal area comprises a confined geographical basin surrounding the northern end of Lake Nyasa. It extends only about 40 miles from the tip of the lake at 1,550 feet above sea level to the Poroto Mountains in the north at 8,000 feet; and from east to west is only about 30 miles, from the almost sheer walls of the Livingstone Mountains (with peaks up to 10,000 feet) to the Ndali Highlands (rising to about 7,000 feet). There are therefore unusually large ecological differences within so small an area. Three major regions are to be distinguished: the "Northern Highlands" over about 4,500 feet, the low-lying "Lake Plains" in the south, and the "Central Region" in between. Everywhere rainfall is reliable and high, averaging at least 100 inches annually, and this amply compensates for a certain poverty and misuse of the soil, although (and particularly in the Central Region) it brings dangers of soil erosion. Except in the highest parts the banana is the staple food, supported by maize, beans, finger millet and groundnuts. In the Northern Highlands coffee has become well established as the principal cash crop: in the Lake Plains paddy rice cultivation provides both a food and a cash crop: in the Central Region the country is too low generally for coffee and too high and dry for rice; consequently cash-cropping is considerably inferior and the people's standard of living is rather poorer.

- 133 The Nyakyusa and their country tended for a long time to be relatively isolated from the outside world by high mountain walls and rain-soaked roads. In addition, or because of it perhaps, they developed an almost unique culture which was supported by considerable conservatism and high insularity. They still continue to regard their African neighbours beyond the mountains as their social and cultural inferiors. The turmoil of the slave-trade in Central Africa passed them by; in modern times they have not enthusiastically accepted Christianity and they have refused to take up the use of Swahili, the Territorial *lingua franca*. In recent years, and most especially since the end of World War II, they have, however, accepted and pushed forward with vigour a rapid and extensive economic development, involving particularly the production of coffee and paddy as cash crops, and large-scale labour migration to the south in the high-wage mining industries. The multiplicity of petty, often tiny, independent chiefdoms has been reorganised to provide four local government areas, each under a Rural Council, in which the old chiefdoms have become something like parishes¹. Although much of the old conservatism and narrow parochialism persists, yet there is now an atmosphere of accepted change, of a keen desire for economic development, and a general acceptance of a cash economy.

- 161 Probably the most significant feature of modern life in the Nyakyusa country is the increasing scarcity of land for agriculture in relation to the

1. At Tukuyu, in the Northern Highlands, annual rainfall averaged 99.28 inches between 1919 and 1932: at Komba, in the Lake Plains, the average between 1940 and 1951 was 106.31 inches.
2. Sir Kingsdon, Z.E.: The initiation of a system of local government by African rural councils in the Rungwe District, Tanganyika; *The Journal of African Administration*, III, 4, October, 1931.

CHAPTER II

THE TRADITIONAL SYSTEM

Although this essay is to be primarily concerned with the modern and changing land and population situation among the Nyakyusa of the Lake Plains, it is quite essential first to have an understanding of the traditional system of political and territorial organisation and of land tenure. This is not mere historicism, for despite changes the traditional system remains as the basis of contemporary land-holding and land law. Whilst actual conditions on the ground change, the Nyakyusa appreciation of those changes and their attitudes to land lag significantly behind. In brief, the traditional system was geared to a situation where there was plenty of land. Today the people find real difficulty in adjusting themselves to a high density of population and an acute shortage of land, with the result that this new situation is aggravated by outmoded practices, attitudes and cultural values. 121

The ancestors of the present group of peoples now known collectively as the Nyakyusa, moved into the Rungwe region from the Ukinga Highlands to the east beyond the peaks of the Livingstone Mountains. According to legend, which is probably substantially true, these newcomers found a sparsely populated country which they easily occupied. Later, following internecine strife, one group under a man called Mwakyusa left the Masoko area in the centre of present-day Rungwe District and moved down into the Lake Plains. There, probably less than 150 years ago, they drove out the Ngonde people and settled. The sons of Mwakyusa took their shares of the country and people and established their independent chiefdoms. The chiefs in 1956 are the lineal descendants, mainly in the fifth generation, of Mwakyusa, and have a well-known genealogy. The only exception to this occurs amongst the group of tiny chiefdoms in the extreme east under the Livingstones, which now form a single administrative chiefdom under Mwakilasa and number some 400 men. They trace descent from pre-Nyakyusa settlers known as the Saku. 178

Traditionally, as today, the village was the basic unit both in social life generally and in land-holding in particular. The Nyakyusa village was possibly unique in Africa. It was comprised of men of roughly the same age, together with their wives and young children, and it included their fathers and sons and also, very often, their elder and younger brothers. Each village consisted of a close group of houses (often centred on a broad "village street"), with arable and pastoral land around it. Each village had fairly well-defined boundaries with its neighbours. The village was represented as a group and acted corporately through its headman, *lifumu*, who was the guardian of villagers' land rights, the arbiter in land problems and disputes, and the controller of unused land. He was also the political and ritual leader of the village, but nevertheless he was a commoner chosen from amongst the villagers themselves, and was not a member of a chiefly lineage. 173

Land was owned by the village as a group. Every man resident in the village had a clear right to a site for his house and banana plot and to arable land within the village boundaries; he also had a right to graze his cattle in its communal pastures. Residence gave these rights and members of other villages were excluded. A man who left the village automatically gave up these rights, though if he returned he was able to take up his former holding or its equivalent. 361

10:Gulliver E-5 (1954-1955)1958 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

631 Age-villages combined to form a chiefdom under the hereditary chief,
628 *malafyale*, but active co-operation between villages thus associated was
often slight; indeed in the larger chiefdoms there commonly existed inter-
mittent animosity which might break out in raiding or even civil war. The
integrity of these larger chiefdoms was weak - for example, when the
[721] Nyakyusa were attacked by Sangu and Ngoni war-parties, and later by the
[648] Germans, villages of the same chiefdom conspicuously failed to join in
common defence. Similarly the land affairs of one village were no concern
of any other, and each jealously guarded its own rights.

631 None of the chiefdoms was large; smallness of scale is typical of
162 Nyakyusa political organisation and social attitudes. In 1955 the smallest
indigenous chiefdom contained only 36 men. In 1948 55,700 people were
divided amongst about 18 indigenous chiefs, but undoubtedly had not the
Colonial Government frozen the system there would have been rather more -
at least five more. Today there are 12 recognised "administrative chiefs",
amongst whom five have each less than 3,000 people under them, and the
largest chiefdom contains fewer than 10,000 people - the average is just over
4,000 people.

631 Nevertheless the chiefdom, the collection of villages, was important,
361 because in the creation of the chiefdom villages were created, and in its
development the villages developed, matured and died away. A village
survived only so long as its members lived and by the nature of the age-
organisation there was but little possibility of the recruitment of new mem-
bers, for villagers' sons left to form their own new villages. Their sons
eventually came to comprise the core of the new chiefdoms.

642 In connection with the constitution of a Nyakyusa village and with
643 land tenure, the significant feature of the chiefdom was its establishment,
796 together with the induction of a new chief, at the great "coming-out"
[228] ceremony, *ubusoka*. In brief, each chief was succeeded by two of his sons - the
eldest son of each of the senior houses of the chief, i.e., of his first two wives.
At the "coming-out" ceremony, when the sons were still young men and their
father was not a particularly old man, the old chiefdom was divided into
two, each part coming under one of the new young chiefs. Before this
critical occasion - at which much important ritual was performed - the
younger men of the old chiefdom had already moved away from their fathers
villages and had established their own incipient villages nearby, each one
containing a group of co-vals. A Nyakyusa boy from the age of about
seven years could not continue to live with his father and mother, but, in
company with his equals, built his own hut on a site adjacent to the main
village as indicated by the fathers' headman. Until the "coming-out" cere-
mony these youths' villages came under the control of the old village head-
men; but with the induction of the new chiefs they achieved independent
status, each with its own headman appointed from among its members by
the old headmen. Each new village was allocated a new building site and a
new arable area, and quite commonly the old villages, the older men, moved
away a little in order to give the younger men adequate access to the land,
for it was considered that the young men's needs for land were paramount.

631 After this wholesale reorganisation of the old chiefdom, when new
178 villages were established and new boundaries demarcated, the old chief
622 himself, the old headmen and the older men (the "fathers") gradually
retired from active public life. The old chief was supposed to commit suicide
643 after a time (or was quietly killed off) in order to leave the field clear for his
[888] sons; the old headmen became the religious and ritual leaders of the new
chiefdoms, with the flavour of elder statesmanship, and the old men's

1. "As the 'coming out' it is said that 'everything is made new', boundaries are redrawn and the new chiefdoms and villages of the young men are ceremonially incorporated". Wilson, G. 1938, p. 31.

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[423] less uncultivated. These areas can easily be picked out today by the absence
[311] of village sites and banana groves. There was something of a rush to grab
land in such areas and in the less densely populated parts of the chiefdoms.
Today in my personal experience - for no general survey has been attempted -
there remains little or no unused land within the paddy-growing region
which can, by native techniques, be brought under the plough; and indeed
men are attempting to grow paddy on unsuitably raised land where inundation
is inadequate. Communal cattle pastures have shrunk as arable holdings
extended until they remain only where cultivation is profitless.

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434 The demand for land has far outrun the physical supply, and in 1955
it still seemed to be insatiable. The initial cycle was that a desire for more
money to permit of a higher standard of living created a demand for more
land on which to produce more cash crops; but the increased level of income
then further stimulated money demands to raise standards higher again,
thus bringing a renewed demand for land. The cycle has now been halted
by the lack of further land to meet the people's needs, but the demand
remains nevertheless and is indeed increased by rising costs of living.

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198 This economic picture is, of course, oversimplified, but it may serve
to illustrate the nature of forces at work in the situation. I would not wish
to overemphasise the snowball effect, for the bulk of the population remains
still largely content with only a little over earlier standards; but increasing
numbers of men and their families are coming to seek something better.
Bicycles have become something of a general necessity; a variety of good
clothing and shoes is considered quite essential. Only a single decade before
the Nyakyusa women still generally went about in the traditional nudity,
whereas in 1955 they must have ranked among the very best-dressed African
women in the Territory. European-type household goods, crockery and
utensils are common. The demand for money, that is for a higher standard of
living, has also been greatly stimulated by the experiences of the thousands of
labour migrants returning from southern towns and mines, and by the cash
and goods they bring back with them.¹

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511 It is not possible for me to attempt to suggest what a desirable acreage
would be for a contemporary Nyakyusa, because money demands, crop
yields and selling prices change and the desire for higher standards of living
also alter as the potentialities of the new cash economy are increasingly
understood. In 1954 the approximate average of Sh.200/- per paddy culti-
vator was earned from perhaps two or three acres of arable land, but an
indeterminable amount of the crop was kept back for home food require-
ments. As will be shown later many men's paddy fields could have been little
more than an acre, and many men, specifically young men, had no paddy
land at all. Certainly there were few who held what they considered, at a
reasonable estimate, to be sufficient land.

[161] This universal cash crop agriculture and the continuing demand for
higher standards of living, and therefore for higher money incomes, is the
real cause of the new and rather sudden pressure of population on the land.
Of course this economic process operates within a situation of relatively
dense population and in a peasant community where land is almost the only
form of capital and alternative enterprise is small. The gradual increase of
population, though probably small, further aggravates the difficult
situation.

Arable Holdings

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[161] It was not possible to obtain adequate, satisfactory data to allow the
calculation of local population densities, and the detailed results of the 1948

1. In Gulliver, P. H.: 1957, an estimate of the cash incomes of Nyakyusa in 1954 is given at pp. 51-2. Data on
the cash brought back by returning labour migrants are given at p. 35.

(e.g. for fear of witchcraft) and take up the vacant holding. Nevertheless in general the holding was allowed to lapse and it could be re-allocated by the village headman if need arose; or the elderly widows might be allowed to continue to reside and cultivate as long as they wished. 428
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Once land began to become scarce and valuable this loose system could no longer continue. Junior brothers and half-brothers were no longer content to permit the chief heir to take the whole of the deceased's holding to do with it as he wished, and a systematised division had to be adopted. At first, naturally enough, land was gradually brought under the same system which controlled the inheritance of other property, but this proved inadequate - inadequate not only in itself as being, perhaps, too complicated and conducive of disagreement and quarrelling in so far as land is concerned, but also because that system itself was already beginning to break down under the impact of individualism. 423
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It was felt that because sons assist their father in his homestead and fields and in their turn rely on him for a share in the cash-and-kind profits of peasant farming, therefore they should have priority in the inheritance of their father's property. Their father's brothers, it was said, would in any case already have their own holdings in which likewise their sons have prime interest. Conversely, older Nyakyusa men began to be reluctant to take a brother's land (and other property too) on his death, for fear that, in their turn, control of their own land would descend at their deaths to their brothers' sons rather than to their own sons.

As a result of these attitudes a strong desire arose to modify the customary laws in this matter, and the Rungwe African District Council, with the approval of the Government, has by formal resolution established a new law under which sons may inherit direct from their own fathers. [646]

This law is not universally accepted by the Nyakyusa of the Lake Plains and sons still will sometimes waive their novel rights in favour of the traditional claims of their fathers' brothers. They say that they do not desire to see the break 'up of the wider lineage which, in effect, this new law encourages; they are also afraid of the anger and jealousy, and thus of the witchcraft, of their uncles. It appears however that the change is accepted by the large majority of the people, for it follows the trend of modern values and kinship sentiments. [754]
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The principal heir is now the eldest son, but in general he has little direct control over the property and land of his half-brothers unless they are still young, in which case he has a moral duty to act as guardian and custodian. Sons inherit that part of the paternal holding which had been allocated to their mother by their father in his lifetime, plus any other pieces he might have given to any of them direct as individuals. Each group of full-brothers determines the way in which it divides up its own inheritance. The eldest brother of such a house has a definite obligation to see that his juniors obtain shares of the land in so far as its extent and their number will allow. On the whole it is expected by Nyakyusa that the eldest brother will secure the best holding for himself, as befits his new status, but he cannot deny his younger brothers' claims. Disputes in this matter are not uncommon and the local courts have already shown their determination to support the claims of younger brothers. 423
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Very commonly - though it has not yet crystallised as compulsory social behaviour - a father will grant a portion of his holding to his son on the latter's marriage, or as soon after as the son decides to give up labour migration and settle down. It is thought that a married man should be independent economically and that he should be able to maintain his own household; it is realised that there is most likely to be friction in the relations between father and son, especially in this society where it is traditionally [183]
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brothers, and this is compelling the increasing and continued fragmentation of holdings at time of inheritance. Even so, if there are several brothers (i.e., sons of the deceased) the youngest among them may still be unable to obtain a plot, or at least not one of an economically viable size, and they are then compelled to try to gain admittance to some other village as newcomers, there to be allocated land. [578]
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The shortage of land is, therefore, not only making inheritance very considerably more important, but it is assisting in the establishment of new kinship attitudes and a redefining of fraternal relations. The position is most confused at the moment as the old system continues to exist alongside the new, sometimes more or less successfully, but often in intractable opposition. At the present time the observer can only mention general tendencies, for it is impossible as yet to foresee what the eventual result will be, and there are, in any case, many other factors involved besides those of the inheritance of scarce land. [178]

In so far as we are primarily concerned with land problems in this essay, the basic factors are that land is newly scarce, that there is virtually no alternative activity in the country to the arable use of the land, and that therefore each son must try to obtain a share in the often inadequate holding of his father. I suggest that no form of inheritance can deal with such a situation satisfactorily - at least it is highly doubtful if any has yet emerged in an area of land shortage in Eastern Africa - and thus there are bound to be severe difficulties and a deterioration of inter-personal relations between near kinsmen who are most in competition. The new inheritance law of the Nyakyusa has narrowed the range of potential conflict from the patrilineal descendants of a grandfather to the sons of a single father; but if it has obviated possible hostility between the generations and between paternal cousins, it has also removed much of the common interest and mutual interdependence between them. [311]
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The Right to Land, and the Authority of the Village Headman

Although the traditional principle still exists that every villager has a right to arable land within the village boundaries, yet it is no longer possible to carry it out in practice. Every village headman, in my experience, attempts to ensure that each of his men has land, but he cannot always succeed, and most especially he cannot provide every one with as much land as he would like, because of sheer spatial limitation. [627]
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Nowhere any longer does the old principle now hold that an established villager may, without permission or notification, take vacant land into cultivation as part of his holding. When land becomes vacant it must now revert immediately to the village as a group, that is to the common pool from which the headman as village authority makes allocations. There are so many and such varied demands for land nowadays that no man acting on his own can presume to take up vacant land, and only the headman may decide allocation. No person can now obtain land, whether he be an established villager or not, unless he is allocated it by the headman - or, in the many large villages typical of the Lake Plains, by the headman's assistant, *ugwakimo*, who is delegated authority in a section of the village. [624]

Land becomes vacant when a man shifts to another village, when a man dies and leaves no active heir who desires to take up the deceased's holding, or (but seldom today) when a man gives up part of his holding due to his inability to use the whole of it. In all these cases the land is immediately re-allocated by the headman, probably not as a single unit any longer, as best he can among a crowd of land-hungry villagers - established men seeking extra land to meet the needs of growing families or for increasing cash-crop

Security of tenure has continued into European times, and although perhaps weakened slightly in one way through the exaggerated powers which accrue to modern Government-supported chiefs, it has been strengthened by the modern peace and rule of law and the more efficient system of justice provided by the established local courts. According to G. Wilson (Wilson, G., 1938, p. 32) the increase in the movement of individuals between villages in earlier European times (i.e., up to about 1940-45) directly caused a lack of attachment to individual plots, and thus security of tenure was not considered particularly important. [311 423 182] [66]

The new situation of land shortage does not affect the basic position, or rather, by producing a high scarcity value on land, it has brought about an intensification of individuals' rights over their holdings. No longer dare a chief or headman attempt to commit such illegal acts as the seizure of a villager's field, so long as that villager is not afraid to publicise the affair. A man is not, and cannot afford to be, prepared to lose his field, for he cannot replace it with any certainty, either in a convenient location or elsewhere. A headman may sometimes bring strong pressure to bear on some of the men of his village to try to persuade them to give up portions of their land to assist a newcomer or a landless neighbour, but a villager can and does refuse and there is no legal authority which can override him here. As the land shortage becomes more obvious and more acute so men become less willing to allow their holdings to be touched for any reason, by anyone. The re-allocation at a "coming-out" ceremony appears to have been dropped nowadays and thus a man holds his land undisturbed until his death, when it passes by inheritance to his sons. There are cases now where grandsons of the original holder occupy land through undisturbed and undisputed inheritance. A man can, as he wishes, loan a kinsman or friend a plot in his holding, or he can make an outright gift. The principal restriction which remains is that a man must continue to live in the village in order to retain these rights; he must relinquish them if he permanently goes to live elsewhere. Nevertheless, the land of a well-established villager would be kept for him pending his hoped-for return, for if he has left in umbrage and fear because of suspected witchcraft, then he may be persuaded to come back after a time. The headman and his neighbours should in fact persist in their attempts to persuade him, even to the use of force, for this is not only a moral duty of age-mates and fellow-villagers but is also an effort to remove the implications of their alleged witchcraft and anti-social conduct. [622 643 626] [118 428] [426] [754]

Once, therefore, a man obtains land he has absolute rights in it during his continued residence in the village. Especially today, older men seldom shift their homes and almost all land is now held on a tenure which will be passed on by inheritance. 423

Boundary disputes are few. Usually, and increasingly, village boundaries are well known, and field boundaries invariably are. During my field measurements in the sample villages, I never met any difficulty with my local teams in quickly establishing the ownership and exact limits of any plot. Boundaries are usually marked by small ridges of accumulated debris or by narrow paths, and these form an intricate and irregular network throughout a village's arable area. They are so well known that there is very little scope for a greedy man to attempt to encroach on a neighbour's holding at hoeing time. If minor disagreements do arise at that season they can be immediately settled - by appeal to neighbours working nearby if necessary - and the headman or his assistant may well not be called in at all. [627]

1. This is the case in the Lake Plains. In some of the more conservative Highland chiefdoms where the cash economy is less advanced and land scarcity is not serious, there still appears to be some re-allocation in favour of the young men in the traditional way. In general, however, it is clear that the traditional age-village system of land allocation is obsolete; see pages 298.

TABLE V
DISTRICTS IN TANGANYIKA WHERE LAND DISPUTES ARE COMMON

		No. of land cases	% of total civil cases	Estimated population density	Population per land case
1953					
Bukoba District		1,189	23	69	223
Lushoto Division		149	12	188	742
Moshi District		347	25	277	746
Ngara District..		81	29	125	1,393

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The Changing Village

The possibly unique age-village of the Nyakyusa is now undergoing considerable and fairly rapid change in response to the new conditions of land shortage. There is, firstly, an increasing sense of village exclusiveness and, secondly, there has been a breakdown in the essential age-basis of its organisation. That is to say, that whilst the corporate unity of the village as an independent group has been strengthened, yet the social foundation of the village has simultaneously been changed and a different sort of village is emerging. It would take us far beyond the scope of this present essay if a full analysis of the changing village were to be made, nevertheless in so far as these changes are more or less directly the consequences of modern land shortage, land tenure and economic conditions some account is essential. Since the age-village was fundamental in the life and social organisation of these people, the new emerging village is of crucial importance.

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Land shortage has definitely exaggerated the unity and exclusiveness of the village in the Lake Plains at a time when, for other reasons, it was beginning to become a more open group. There was always, as we have seen, insistence on the principle that only a member of the village could hold and use village land; but village boundaries were often poorly marked and it was difficult to determine which headman, if any, had genuine jurisdiction over land relatively distant from the established village sites. Nor was it particularly important to be able to do so whilst land was plentiful. As paddy cultivation spread, men began seeking extra fields farther and farther away from home as land nearby was all taken up; and so long as they did not attempt to take land in the immediate vicinity of another village site there was seldom much difficulty in this. The attitudes born of a sufficiency of land persisted and headmen were not disposed to protest against outsiders who sought fields near the limits of their vaguely defined areas. Internecine warfare and raiding had, of course, been abolished as an expression of and a weapon in inter-village rivalries and animosities. With the establishment of general peace and security, and with increasing movement about the country between villages, and chiefdoms, such rivalries and animosities began to die away. Many men came to live in the villages which they themselves had not helped to found; their coevals from their fathers' villages lived elsewhere, many of them widely scattered, and it was not possible to maintain a high degree of village patriotism, and, people began to feel, it was not especially necessary or important any longer.

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It began to be possible for a man to hold some of his arable land within the area of another village, so long as members of the second village were not deprived of the opportunity of their own agricultural expansion should they desire it. This was especially the case when a large area of hitherto vacant (i.e. bush) but now valuable paddy land was contained within the approximate boundaries of a village. Outsiders were allowed to acquire fields on the strength of kinship with the headman or with one of the established villagers, or even by giving some small present to the headman (e.g. a little beer or some meat, etc.). Land was still plentiful then, or so it seemed to the Nyakyusa, and future shortages and difficulties were not perceived.

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422 Thus beyond the established fields in the vicinity of the village itself, the pattern of land holding tended to become confused. The majority of land-holders were still members of the village who were expanding their cultivation outwards, but there was a considerable number of men from neighbouring villages, and even from farther afield where opportunities were more restricted. Some men even began to have a second house, inhabited by a junior wife, in another village from which to continue the more easily the cultivation of new holdings.

[591] This sort of development was in the event only a short-term process and, had pressure of population on the land not become so critical, it is not possible to say what would have been the final result upon Nyakyusa social and village organisation. It is, nevertheless, important to note that in the beginnings of the extension of arable holdings, cash-crop cultivation operated in a system in which village exclusiveness was breaking down, when residence was no longer an essential prerequisite of land-holding, and when men were neighbours in the fields as farmers without being coevals of a single village.

Once the Nyakyusa, and particularly the more perceptive headmen, began to realise that land was becoming less plentiful, indeed that it was beginning to be scarce in relation to new demands, this novel tendency was stopped fairly quickly and the old traditional principle of land-holding only by residence was reasserted. In the most recent years this has been strongly insisted on. Headmen and their villagers saw that in order to safeguard their own rights they must prevent scarce, valuable land being held and used by outsiders. This reaction appears to have been universal and automatic among the Nyakyusa. There was now insufficient land for everyone's demands and each village therefore looked after what it considered to be its own interests. Outsiders who already held fields could not be deprived of them, but they were not allowed to extend their holdings and every opportunity was, and still is, taken to regain control of their fields for allocation to villagers proper. Inheritance was often disallowed unless the heir agreed to come and live permanently in the village; gifts or loans to outsiders (kin or friends) were no longer permitted and most headmen seized the opportunity to re-allocate to their own villagers any alien-held plots which were not consistently maintained in cultivation.

[622] In response to the new situation, almost everywhere village boundaries were clearly demarcated - not without a certain amount of dispute and a new recognition of inter-village opposition. Nowhere now is it possible for a man to take up land over which there is no firmly established village ownership. The significant principle has now emerged that not only does a village, as a corporate and distinct group, own its own land and is represented in this by its headman; but all land is now owned by some village. Further, at least in the high-density regions, there is no longer any vacant land to be taken up and any land temporarily falling vacant comes immediately under the allocating authority of the headman.

[622] This process, the application of this principle, is not yet quite universal in the Lake Plains, and it is sometimes still possible to see it coming into operation. Still in the northerly parts of the Lake Plains - the low-density region - one may see fields occupied by a variety of outsiders, for there the realisation of the significance of land shortage has been slowest to come. For example, in Mwakipesile's chiefdom in the late 1940s and early 1950s it was the practice of men from the congested villages nearer the Lake to obtain valuable, virgin paddy land in the newly opened areas in the north (near Ipinda) without residential qualifications. Many men reserved their original holdings in their own villages for food crops and had their main paddy fields in this distant area. By 1955, however, it had become virtually impossible for a non-resident to obtain extra land in this way, although still

there remained scattered pieces here and there which could be taken up, and some existing holdings in the area are too large for the agricultural capabilities of their occupiers. The temporary safety valve was shut off. The local headman had become seriously worried over the large-scale alienation of his land resources without any equivalent increase in the number of his villagers, and he also wished to conserve the remaining land against the now better understood needs of his own people. 423
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The principle of no land without residence also means that a villager who wishes to move must automatically forfeit his land-holding in the village. A little earlier he would most probably have been able to retain at least his fields beyond the immediate vicinity of the houses - in so far as his new residence was not too far away to allow continued cultivation. This has been especially important for younger men who, wishing to take up a vacant holding elsewhere, also desire to retain their share of the paternal holding obtained by inheritance. Conversely, they are now unable to move on to their father's holding and yet retain their fields in their own village. Such men must now make a permanent decision between the utility of, perhaps, two inadequate holdings which, however, combined together might be of satisfactory size.

As a consequence of this, inter-village opposition is probably greater than it has ever been in European times, and no less strong perhaps than it was in the old days. Men feel that the security of their holdings, the future of their sons, and the possibility of increasing their arable cultivation lies wholly within the security and stability of their own village. They tend to see other villages and other villagers as a potential threat to their own land requirements; they often suspect the worst of neighbouring villages who, they think, will, given the chance, seize some of their land. Headmen and villagers would refuse to cross the boundary into another village when they accompanied me during my investigations, lest they be accused of contemplating appropriation of the land there. Such aliens who still retained land in a village were regarded with some animosity. Nyakyusa would not look beyond their own village boundaries in an attempt to make an appreciation of the modern overall land situation. They wished only tenaciously to cling to what they already had and to guard it jealously; they were only too inclined to believe that other villages nearby were better off and to use them as scapegoats for their own difficulties and shortage. It must be said that this renewed insistence on village exclusiveness and the inviolability of village boundaries has in fact tended to make for a certain inequality of land-holding according to the perceptiveness and celerity with which headmen claimed authority over formerly vacant lands. This condition is, however, overexaggerated in men's claims today, and in any case it is tending to disappear under the pressure of inter-village movement. [628]

The Nyakyusa village in the Lake Plains, with its intensified independence and aggressive exclusiveness, and jealous of its believed permanent boundaries, has not at the same time been able to retain its traditional coeval basis. Whereas formerly the youths of a village moved to one side, there to build their own hamlet and eventually to acquire their own fields in association with its establishment as a full village in its own right, now this is no longer feasible or even possible, for the land is not available for this sort of expansion. The young men are driven back on a dependence on the fields already held by their fathers in the old village. They gradually move into their fathers' places and take over the paternal holdings; or, as we have seen, they seek where they may to obtain new allocations in any other village where they can gain admittance. The coeval basis of village living is lost. [181]

The boys and youths still leave their fathers' houses and build their first, small huts together on a site somewhere adjacent to the main village site, [882]
[361]
[561]

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[56] as determined by the village headman. But even building sites with the essentially associated banana groves are becoming increasingly scarce and valuable, for no one desires to decrease the amount of arable by enlarging the built-up areas - rather the reverse. The number of young men's villages is therefore diminishing and congestion of their huts is increasing to the stage very often where no more than a narrow passage is left between adjacent houses. There comes to be a wider age range in the young men's hamlets where, often, a large village provides only one for all its sons. Smaller villages sometimes provide no accommodation at all for their sons, who are thus compelled to seek membership of a neighbouring group. These hamlets are mainly regarded nowadays as temporary residential areas for the young men until such time as they move on to an existing holding - their father's or some other. There is therefore no attempt to provide sufficient space for an adequate banana grove with each young man's house, let alone a food-crop plot behind it. The arable land beyond the congested huts already belongs to inhabitants of the main village. When a young man is able to leave and take up a holding, his vacated site (together, often, with the hut) is taken over by a waiting youth who has probably been sharing with another hitherto.

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[648] These young men's hamlets do not, any longer, eventually mature and become villages in their own right with their own headman and arable lands. Formerly, when this occurred, they would probably have taken over a good deal of the lands of the old village, as the young men exercised the privileges of their new maturity against their elders with the emergence of the new chiefdom. New chiefdoms, and with them new villages, no longer emerge, and this is mainly because Government has prohibited the bifurcation of petty chiefdoms on the death of the old chief, as it is considered inconsistent with the development of stable, modern local government. Additionally, however, the shortage of land can no longer allow of the traditional expanding politico-territorial organisation. The elder men's villages are not now prepared to yield ground to the young men, and the latter cannot expand elsewhere. Thus political requirements and land restriction work together to make the old system obsolete and to freeze the spatial distribution of villages as it existed in early European times. As far as I could ascertain in the chiefdoms of the Lake Plains, probably no new village had emerged in the past 20 or more years, except for a few cases of large ones splitting into two for administrative and social convenience. Many villages there date back to pre-European days often now under the son, or even the grandson, of the original headman (though this is not essential or invariable in any way).

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428 The age-basis of the Nyakyusa village is thus disappearing; indeed, in many villages it has already disappeared in everything but the young men's hamlets. Where the process has gone least far, there is still apparent a rough division of the single village into the old men's sector (men at least 50 years of age, and many much older); the middle-aged men's sector (men between about 30 and 50 years old, being the younger brothers or elder sons of the old men); and the young men's and youths' sector. On inheritance, sons tend to show a continued reluctance to move and live on their father's house-site and to become immediate neighbours of older men; they avoid it if possible, often allowing a middle-aged man to shift there instead. Nevertheless even this sort of age-division is rapidly vanishing and in very many villages a man's neighbour may be of any age.

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[423] We have seen that inheritance is now one of the chief methods of obtaining land. Under the new inheritance rules, this means that sons follow their fathers and take up their fathers' arable holdings, building sites and banana groves. Some young men inherit early, others inherit late; there is no longer any notion or possibility of the younger generation entering into its

land en bloc. Young men compete with one another, with their elder brothers and with their fathers for allocations of land left vacant. We also saw, however, that often in the larger families¹ not all the sons are able to get a share of the paternal holding, or at least not a share of practicable size. Thus younger sons are forced to resort to trying to obtain vacant land elsewhere - possibly within the same village, but as often as not outside. Finally, the young man on his new holding may find his neighbours to be of any age; certainly they will not have been members of his own original coeval hamlet.

The way for this changing concept of village life and the new sort of village was prepared in the years before land shortage became important. The changed political system has been briefly noted already, but no less important was the great increase in inter-village movement in earlier European days when peace and personal security had been established. During this period Wilson (1938, page 32) reckoned that perhaps 80 per cent. of Nyakyusa shifted at least once from the place where they first obtained fields. This estimate, whilst perhaps holding good for Highland Nyakyusa amongst whom Wilson mainly worked, was too high for the people of the Lake Plains, where about 40 per cent. is more correct according to my genealogical and village surveys. That is still a relatively high degree of mobility for a mainly subsistence, peasant society such as it was in those years. It is clear that the pseudo-fraternal bond of coevality could not persist as a main element of village life and consciousness, when in fact as many as half of the members of a village were not original coeval founders but had come in from elsewhere. Before the land shortage, movement did not entail the shifting of young men to other young men's villages, or of older men to other older men's villages. It was, at least eventually, promiscuous movement, ignoring age categories. The compulsions of land shortage seem, in retrospect, only to have followed existing lines of village development and to have begun the completion of the process.

In the Lake Plains, therefore, the village persists as a close, territorial, land-owning group and as a specific cluster of homesteads and huts, usually with a village street, the whole closely hemmed in by continuous banana groves. Beyond this lie the arable lands, usually food-crop fields nearby and paddy fields farther off. In jealously protecting what it already holds, the village has gained a new exclusiveness, for the security of the individual land-holder is maintained by the corporate ownership of the village and by excluding outsiders as far as possible. On the other hand, it is no longer an age-village either in fact or intention, and it cannot be, for age-villages were consistent only with an expanding territorial system and a subsistence economy.

This brief analysis of Nyakyusa village organisation in recent times applies only to the Lake Plains. In some parts of both the Central Region and the Northern Highlands the age-basis of Nyakyusa villages had most probably already been seriously weakened in pre-European times.² On the other hand, elsewhere, and particularly in the more conservative parts less affected by modern trends and the cash economy, the traditional age-village still exists in something like its old form.

Land shortage has appeared in the Highlands together with a developing cash economy, but the basis of agricultural and economic change lies mainly in coffee cultivation which, of course, requires relatively smaller fields than does paddy in the Lake Plains, but it needs more care and attention from the grower for moderate success. As far as I could see in the course of

1. Polygamy is still the norm amongst the older and many middle-aged men, and therefore a father often leaves several sons to inherit.

2. According to elderly informants in Western Kavue, Meechali and some central chiefdoms, and also the evidence of old village sites.

311 my earlier labour migration enquiries in the Highlands, the village as a close
433 residential unit is breaking up as the people are increasingly adopting the
245 more common East African pattern of each family building its own home-
stead in its own land-holding. These northern Nyakyusa say that they must
have their coffee plots next to their homesteads for the sake of continuous
supervision, and that this is impossible (which is true enough) where men live
close together in compact villages. Again, coffee plots, with their standing,
permanent trees, have become a valuable item of inheritance; sons lose no
opportunity of taking them irrespective of the locations of their coevals or
of the identity of their immediate neighbours. The values of land, cash-crops
and material progress are placed much higher than the traditional values of
coevality; indeed, such traditional values are largely inconsistent with modern
wants and aspirations.

561 Thus the Nyakyusa age-village has become almost obsolete and it
361 would seem that it must inevitably vanish altogether even in the remaining
178 conservative areas (e.g., in the east). Furthermore, its disappearance is
leading to a distinct divergence between the Lake Plains Nyakyusa and those
of the Highlands. How far this divergence will become permanent and
basically significant cannot be foreseen as yet in this early stage. Clearly
the compact village is best fitted to an arable economy of rice cultivation
in the Lake Plains, and at least until there is further agricultural change it
will persist as a most important social group.

602 Nevertheless, with its enhanced exclusiveness and relative social isolation
152 and with renewed rivalry with its neighbours, the Lake Plains village is
182 scarcely conducive to the encouragement of agricultural and economic
development. Neither is it anything but harmful towards contemporary
efforts in the politico-administrative sphere to reduce parochialism and to
foster a sense of unity and co-operation beyond the village and the petty
traditional chiefdoms. Whilst supervisory control of the land through the
headman is in general excellent, reasonable and readily understandable
to the people, yet the excess of restrictiveness, the competitive scrambling
for vacated holdings and the jealous fears are surely more than merely
unfortunate. There needs to be some modification to loosen the over-tight
strings of village corporate ownership, to regularise the transfer of vacated
holdings and to lessen the fears of village against village. These points are
taken up again in Chapter V.

Cattle and Pastoral Requirements

311 Unfortunately, no great accuracy can be presumed for the Rungwe
233 District cattle censuses, but the available figures are summarised in Table VI.

TABLE VI
NYAKYUSA CATTLE

	No. of cattle	1955 Acres per head	Cattle per person	Cattle per family of 5	1951 No. of cattle	Acres per head
Lake Plains ..	31,418	4.1	0.5	2.5	26,822	5.2
Central Region ..	19,380	7.1	0.4	2	19,160	7.2
N.E. Highlands ..	19,095	7.4	0.4	2	17,165	8.4
N.W. Highlands ..	22,974	8.0	0.4	2	16,835	10.9
Total:						
Nyakyusa...	92,867	6.4	0.4	2	80,002	7.2

The indicated increase in the numbers of cattle may well be attributable
only to improved census enumeration by the Veterinary Department.

Although 6.4 acres per head of cattle for all Nyakyusa country, and
even 4.1 acres in the Lake Plains, might seem to be adequate in a country so

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[241] Whereas in the Highland and Central regions the large numbers of cattle - in relation, that is, to the available pasture resources - are causing over-grazing and soil erosion, particularly in the hilly areas so often nowadays relegated to pasturage, on the other hand in the flood plains there does not appear, at least to the layman, to have been any serious effects on the land. The natural manuring of the paddy fields in the dry season is advantageous. In the Lake Plains it is the cattle rather than the land which suffer, but so far the Nyakyusa have done virtually nothing to meet the new conditions, other than to complain bitterly and fruitlessly.

The Young Men: Land Shortage and Labour Migration

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The younger Nyakyusa men find increasing difficulty in obtaining arable land now that there are no longer vacant areas to be taken up, and the older men are no longer prepared to cede their land rights in favour of the younger generation, as they traditionally did. When occasional fields are left vacant, the young men must take their turn with their elders, who themselves are so chronically short of land - and the headmen commonly favour the older villagers with families as against the younger men. This means that in the high-density regions the majority of men under the age of about 30 years have little or no arable land, nor can they hope for it until the deaths of their fathers. In the congested village sites even their banana plots may be smaller than is desirable for the provision of the staple food.

[593] The young man, then, is compelled to remain dependent on his father's and elder brother's holding; indeed, headmen often justify their refusal to allocate plots to young men on the express grounds that the latter must share their elders' fields. Thus the valued independence of the young Nyakyusa is severely restricted and it seems that tensions and difficulties are beginning to arise between fathers and sons, and between brothers, because of this. [178] Sons are blamed for not doing their fair share in the family cultivation; [578] fathers are blamed for giving their sons inadequate shares in crops and crop incomes. It will be remembered that one of the fundamental principles underlying Nyakyusa society and its age-village organisation is the spatial segregation of parents and children (cf. page 22). Now they are inevitably being put into competition with one another over inadequate fields in a single holding.

[434] The young men are severely restricted, if not altogether cut off, from the opportunity to cultivate paddy in their own fields and thus to earn their incomes at home, for paddy-growing is the only way of earning a living in the Lake Plains. Yet it is these younger men whose money demand is greatest; [545] to buy clothing, bicycles and other store-goods, and to buy cattle for marriage payments. They are therefore strongly attracted by the ready opportunities for taking up wage-labour abroad, in the mines of the Rhodesias and South Africa where wages are high (see Colliver, 1957).

With the best will in the world, when, as in the very high-density region, the average holding is little more than an acre and a half - when, that is, the older men themselves desire larger acreages for their own cultivation needs - it is not possible for a father to allow his son to take large shares in his fields. In some cases a father does give outright to his adult sons strips of his holding, but plots so provided are necessarily small. Quite as frequently a father does not consider it possible to break up his holding in his own lifetime, and sons are expected to assist in the common cultivation and to contribute merely to be given a share in the family proceeds at harvest. It is not surprising, therefore, that very large numbers of young men from the Lake Plains migrate abroad to work. Only about one man in 20 has not been away at all before the age of about 25 years. Much higher proportions of men and larger numbers absolutely are temporarily absent from the Lake

Plains than from any other Nyakyusa area. In the high-density regions, the proportion of young men away at any one time is about 50 per cent. on the average and the proportion has risen concomitantly with the increasing scarcity of land.

It is not, of course, suggested that land shortage is the only factor responsible for contemporary labour migration amongst the Nyakyusa. Elsewhere (loc. cit.) I have drawn attention to the very high wages, the increased opportunity to obtain outside employment, the development of transport services and the intensification of recruiting, together with the general desire of the people to gain a higher standard of living as they more thoroughly embrace the new money economy. In fact, wage-labour in the mines is more profitable than growing paddy at home under current agricultural practice, even were land more easily available. Nevertheless, more young men do leave their homes in the Lake Plains than elsewhere in the country, and there is a rough correlation between land availability and the degree of labour migration, which seems to indicate that where men can obtain more land they tend to seek their money incomes at home. The Nyakyusa themselves, with an intensity of tribal patriotism, say that they much prefer to remain at home if they can earn their money there, even if they earn rather less than they might obtain abroad; but, say the young men, it is impossible to earn anything like sufficient when the fields are unobtainable in which to cultivate the cash-crop.

The data which I have been able to collect are summarised in Table VII. Young men are defined here as those under about 30 years old.

TABLE VII
YOUNG MEN: LAND HOLDING AND LABOUR MIGRATION

Village and chiefdom	Young men having own paddy field	Young men away at work	Average holding of: Young men who own land	Older men in same village
1. Very high density region				
Mpongo Mwakipende ..	17%	53%	0.5 acres	1.9 acres
Kapugi Korroo ..	23%	34%	0.75 acres	1.5 acres
Naloko Mwakipende ..	28%	31%	—	—
2. High density region				
Naloko Mwakipende ..	37%	47%	1.6 acres	3.7 acres
Kapugi Mwakipende ..	51%	39%	1.25 acres	4.5 acres

There are some young men who have small food-crop plots but no paddy field, but I have chosen to correlate labour migration with paddy cultivation because these are almost the only alternative ways of earning money today, and the people themselves recognise the fact. The number of samples is too small, but the general inference seems to be quite clear nonetheless. My own conclusions in this matter were, however, arrived at independently of these figures, which were only obtained for corroboration. The evidence of the people themselves and their obvious difficulties of earning money at home were overwhelming.

If anything is required to underline the current land shortage and to illustrate the small size of the average holding, it surely lies in the existence of villages in which only about one quarter of the young men have their own paddy fields, and in which the average holding of this minority amounts to less than an acre.

Only in the low-density region can the young men obtain the fields they require. There, as they did traditionally, the young adult sons continue to assist their fathers in the heavier labour in the fields, but gradually before marriage they accumulate and extend their own holdings and so achieve economic independence. Elsewhere in the Lake Plains this process is taking much longer and indeed it now very frequently awaits inheritance at the death

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[198] of the father. The old principle that every man had the right to arable land applied no less strongly to the young men, married or bachelors. Today most headmen will refuse to entertain the applications of young bachelors for land, and in this they merely represent general public opinion. But many young husbands likewise cannot obtain land, or only an insufficient amount.

Consequently, the following case-history, which I recorded for one young man, is not unusual. In 1955 he lived in the Mlangali young-men's hamlet, attached to Mpunguti village in Mwakipele's chiefdom, where his father lives. He was about 27 years old and had a wife and one child. Twice he had been to work in the mines and from the profits of this employment he had completed his bridewealth payment and had bought, in addition, three cattle, a bicycle and some good clothing. He thought he would probably go away again. Behind his house his wife had about 300 square yards of bananas and there was a tiny patch of cassava. This man had no other land, but he assisted in the heavy labour on his father's holding (about 1.7 acres in all) and by family convention he normally took for his own use the paddy crop of a small strip there; he insisted, however, that he had not been given this strip outright and that it remained at his father's pleasure. He had an unmarried half-brother about 22 years old who had not obtained even that concession at the time. Their father was about 55 years old and had two other sons who were still boys. The young man himself had been refused an allocation of land by the headman on the grounds that (as the headman well knew) he had the use of this strip of his father's land, and also because, as the eldest son, he would be the principal heir on his father's death. He was clearly worried about his future, for he did not wish to go abroad again and leave his wife and child; but he did not see how he could stay at home without seriously lowering his standard of living to little above subsistence level.

[511] I quote this brief case-history not necessarily as typical - though I think it probably is - but as an actual illustration of the present state of affairs as they affect an individual.

The Modern "Chief" and the Land

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631 Most of the traditional chiefs, *abanyafyale*, have been recognised and salaried under the Native Authority, and they are officially referred to today as *abatwa* (s. *nwa*). Some of the smallest chiefdoms have been absorbed administratively by their larger neighbours, and, although they are still recognised by the people, their *abanyafyale* have lost very much of their earlier prestige and authority. In the Lake Plains the modern chiefdoms are often rather larger than is usual amongst the Nyakyusa,¹ but they are, of course, small in comparison with the size of most African chiefdoms in Tanganyika.

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[48] The slightness of the traditional authority of the chief in land matters has already been noted (pages 7-8) and in general this still holds. In European times, however, the recognised chiefs have been given an increased authority and prestige as the local intermediaries between Government and people, and until recent years they were almost the only local instruments of the Government amongst the Nyakyusa. They have been backed by the all-powerful European, who preferred to deal with single, recognised individuals thought to have prime authority in a locality, and the European officer has been encouraged in this notion by an over-enthusiastic policy of indirect rule. Such chiefs were able to assume a degree of power well beyond the traditional limits, and to aggrandize themselves thereby. The ordinary commoner was never quite sure how far his chief was individually claiming more than he

1. On the numerical size of chiefdoms see notes, page 6.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Briefly to summarise the contemporary land situation: in the Lake Plains it may be said that in the main the traditional land tenure system and land law still continue as the basis of native land holding today. The essential feature in recent years has been the acute land shortage in relation to arable needs under the current system of agriculture. Village unity and village exclusiveness have been increased and so also has the authority of the village headman in his control and allocation of land rights. Security of tenure has been strengthened, if anything, and one of the most important methods of obtaining land is now by inheritance. The new law establishing inheritance from father to sons, whilst generally acceptable to the people, is producing a number of civil suits which form the greatest proportion of the more important land cases before the local courts.

The shortage of land is principally the result of increased demands for paddy (i.e. cash crop) cultivation, although the population appears to be increasing slowly. In the high density regions almost all men have considerably less land than they could cultivate, especially under the impetus of the ox-plough, with the developing desires for money income. In the low density region of the low foothills there is still some vacant or partly utilised land, though of very inferior quality for paddy cultivation. The shortage hits the younger men severely, and many of them cannot obtain land at all until the death or senility of their fathers. Fragmentation and dispersion of holdings is rapidly becoming serious and without check.

The first question which arises is whether anything can be done to ease the pressure of population on the country by making more land available, or by making its distribution more equitable.

The thinly populated parts of the northern region of the Lake Plains offer a meagre solution only, for the country is raised above the level of the flood plains and is often broken and hilly. Fertility is low, erosion is a constant danger and the paddy yield (if obtainable at all) is poor. Nyakyusa from the densely populated areas to south and east are therefore most unwilling to move there. In any case the available land, which remains safety and economically open to cultivation, is filling up fairly quickly - mainly by immigration. Certainly I do not think that it can supply sufficient space to meet modern needs. There is, however, no reason why immigrants should make a difficult situation worse, and therefore it is suggested that further immigration from outside the Lake Plains should be carefully controlled if not altogether prevented. Indubitably outsiders (almost entirely Nyakyusa from the Highlands) who hold land without permanent residence should be prohibited and their holdings reallocated to local inhabitants.

As I have already indicated (page 17), I do not think that the problem of men who hold unusually large acreages is particularly serious. Such large holdings are relatively few and will be inevitably split up by inheritance on the deaths of the present occupiers.

In the flood plains proper there is, as far as I am aware, extremely little new land which could be brought under cultivation. Mechanical assistance in the clearance of dense reed thickets and in drainage schemes would produce

1. These areas of thickets are heavily inundated in the wet season but, if cleared, could be used for a dry season crop.

This is not the province of the Sociologist, and all that can be said here is that it seems the most practical and valuable policy that could be adopted: it should be made the chief line of attack on contemporary problems. Unfortunately the Nyakyusa do not appreciate the value of this sort of solution - at least not yet - and therefore they are not inclined to learn and to increase their efforts and to change their practices in the fields. They have not yet rid themselves of the notion that increased production of crops and thus increased profits from agriculture are correlated only with increased holdings. In view of the critical land shortage a crucial change of attitude and understanding is required. The Nyakyusa must learn that increased production and higher profits can come from new and more efficient techniques - i.e. intensive cultivation. They must also learn what is so difficult for the African, that quality of production is no less important than quantity and that therefore cash incomes and standards of living can be raised by improving the standard of crops to be sold. Indeed, with a tendency for world agricultural prices to fall due to increasing supply, quality of produce is of the greatest importance. This is notably so in the case of rice. Tanganyika African rice is reckoned as of lower quality than that from South-east Asia, which therefore commands not only the better price but also the main share of the keenly competitive market. But it is a difficult idea for the Nyakyusa to grasp. It seems obvious to them, inheriting attitudes of a former subsistence age, that three poor cattle are better than two good ones - and in fact so they were in the hazardous time of their grandfathers. Cash crop production is based on the same premise, but it cannot hold in a modern cash economy and in dealings with world markets.

If, however, the present land shortage continues unchecked by the successful introduction of new attitudes, ideas and techniques there may well be serious social and political repercussions in the not too distant future. Current schemes of tribal development will surely be rendered futile if economic activity is restricted and if land discontent is allowed to become important.

A second agricultural policy, and one of which less is heard, would be to stop the present dangerous monoculture - the persistence with paddy alone - and to attempt on a large scale to introduce second and third cash crops, particularly such crops as require intensive cultivation on small acreages. This may be forced on the people in any case if the gloomy prognostications of world rice prices are borne out in the next few years. Such a development would allow of a more stable economy and a more balanced agriculture, in addition to assisting towards a reduction of land difficulties. Experiments on a small scale in robusta coffee, palm oil and other crops have already been started by the Agricultural Department but, at least from the layman's point of view, they need priority in finance, attention and effort as a main part of an agricultural programme for the Lake Plains.

In the time available for my investigations it was not possible to enquire with sufficient care into the details and exact procedure of Nyakyusa land law (c.f. page 3) and therefore I am reluctant to suggest any drastic changes. The new inheritance law (page 21) is a step in the right direction and is clearly in keeping with modern trends, but it is suggested that its detailed operation on the ground and in the courts should be studied by the Native Authority and the Administration in order to attempt to define its meaning more clearly and to reduce the number of disputes. In order to check fragmentation before it has gone too far, it should be considered whether some minimum limit might not be imposed on the size of fields. Voluntary schemes for the consolidation of holdings, which have achieved some success elsewhere in Africa, might also be considered. These would be particularly valuable in the

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

BISGAARD

House-Types of the Nyakyusa

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by horizontal bamboo joints, at right angles to the principal beams of the ceiling. This ceiling never covers the entire room, but only the greater part, and always the part directly above the hearth. Up here forward is placed in dry. A fine black basket is hung from the ceiling above the fire. Access to the loft is by means of a ladder. [342] [372]

When you read reports by the 'first' Europeans on these peoples and their houses, they always refer to a round house with reclining walls and a conical roof. Merriam (1894) mentions and illustrates such a house (pages 141 et seq.). Filleborn (1906) mentions and illustrates several houses (Trat Volume pages 376 et seq., and Atlas, plates 64-67). The inner surface of the walls of the house was decorated with patterns impressed into the mud layer which covers the bamboo poles. The three stones that form the hearth are shown, and also the bed behind a low permanent partition wall. These were exceptionally fine houses with beautiful, decorated and painted doors. The entrance had relief ornaments, often of coloured clay. Filleborn notes that the mud houses are the dwellings of married people. [352]

There is no doubt that the round house is the original type of dwelling. In 1935, I saw no round houses like the ones described by the above scholars, but I know that formerly they were often seen, at least as late as 1933. Professor Monica Wilson of Cape Town has told me that she saw them everywhere in 1932, but that during a visit to the district in 1935 she found only one single house of this type, in the village of Manika. [378] [342]

At the time of my visit, round houses could be seen, but not the type having walls inclining inwards near the ground, and they were not by far as imposing as the houses mentioned above; and there were not many of them. I had the opportunity to make drawings of three houses, all occupied by old people. [342]

The round house is called an *tsinga*. In one of these *tsingas* there lived an old man whose wife, Malia, lived across the courtyard in a rectangular hut of the old Nyakyusa type (see infra). The husband's house was 6.5 metres across, and was divided in halves by a fence made from sticks. One half was where the man lived; it had one bed for him, and one for his grandchildren, who would come to visit him, now and then. Near the wall were two iron chests; also, a board had been hung at the wall as a roost for the chicken. A hen's nest, a small wicker basket, was placed about 3 ft. above the floor in the formation of a four or five-pronged stick. These hen's nests are seen in all houses. The ceiling was supported by seven upright posts, seemingly placed entirely at random. The under side of the roof was strengthened by eight circular-running fascines of bamboo. In the centre, a heavy log (not bamboo) reached up to the pointed top of the roof. [542] [353] [352] [231]

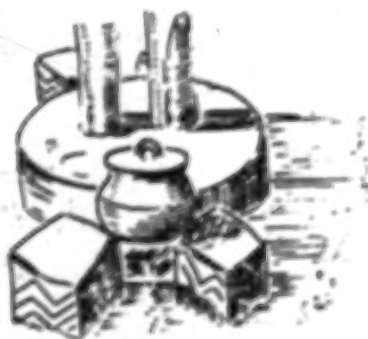
The other half of the house was reserved for the cattle, three cows and two calves; there were five posts to which the cattle were tied at night. [231]

The house had an outer door at each end, but there was no passage from the man's half to that of the cattle.

342 Another old woman lived in a neighbouring *tsings* close by—if possible even more sparsely furnished than the last mentioned.

Common features of the round houses were: their size, the wooden centre-post, the ceiling covering the greater part of the room, the supporting posts for the beams that carry the bamboo joints and the ceiling proper; the building materials—bamboo and mud; and the positioning of the hearth slightly off centre.

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The two hearths of Malia's house. A clay base surrounds the twin posts that serve to support them. Two fourfooters at either side form the hearth, the clay base acting as the third 'stone'.

178 The differences between this *tsings* and the original round-type house are: the angle of the wall, here vertical (as opposed to the inclination of the wall of the original house); the entrance (here without ornaments); the door (itself without ornaments); and further the fact that the clay coils placed between the bamboo poles were here not the shape but only the size of rolls. The pictures presented by Fillekens clearly show the carefully formed clay balls in the wall.

[531] As distinct from the old-type house, this new type of house has no decoration on the inside of the wall, but in some instances decorations are found on the floor.

342 Another type of house, again, was rectangular, often very long, with a ridge-beam roof. In most cases, these houses were buttressed along both sides, and were thus provided with what you might call two verandahs. Sometimes also the gables of the houses had buttresses. The roof projected over the gables, most near the ridge. The roof sagged in the middle, a fact that was already observed by the scholars mentioned. This may be because the ridge-beam is not dry but fresh cut, when it is assumed in its place. During the subsequent drying process and had it will then be brought in sag—as we know from other types of houses.

This house I called an *tsings* and is known to be typical of the Nyakyusa since older times. Literally, *tsings* means stable or cowhouse, thus presumably indicating its original purpose. There is a full description of this house in Fillekens.

352 two water jars, baskets, stools, a ladder leading to the loft, and a table. The rooms
415 were large and spacious, 3 m by 14 m, and in two places low partitions were
353 used to effect a sub-division of the rooms. One may well wonder at the great
length of these houses, but probably it is quite true what is said, that, when—in
1891—the Germans took charge of the region and imposed a tax on houses, the
342 Nyakyusa men made their women move in under their own roofs—only at the
177 same time extending the houses, using the technique they already knew from
the cowhouses.

648 Fülleborn reports on this payment of taxes, and finds it reasonable enough,
178 because, he says, "it fosters in the people an understanding of work and discipline,"
342 and of the house tax he says, "it works to abolish polygamy, since every woman,
following the traditions of her country, has her own house, for which her husband
must pay the tax."

But the Banyakyusa seems to have adapted themselves to the new law and
have moved their wives in the very long houses, thus escaping part of the taxes...

342 The third type of house was a rectangular house with a hipped roof. This type
is called *ikoma*, which means tent. It was also called *isura*, the meaning of which
I have not been able to ascertain; maybe it means chicken-breast, to which it
bears much likeness.

This is the modern house-type to which Fülleborn may be referring when he
talks about rectangular houses, "... the very rare instances when a hipped roof
is seen ..." (page 379).

342 According to statements made by people who have lived in the district for a
177 third of a century, this type of house is thought to have come from the south some
50 years ago. I have not visited the Ngonda who live farther south, but Sir Harry
Johnston (1897) depicts a group of people called "Wankonde (North Nyasa)" in
front of a house which looks very much like the modern *ikoma* of the Banyakyusa.
It seems therefore reasonable to assume that the roof-construction design of the
Ngonda has now reached the district of the Banyakyusa. Johnston also informs
us that the rectangular type is not actually the original type in East Africa, but
that it was probably introduced by the Arabs.

342 This *ikoma* or *isura* is shorter than the long *ikibaga*; seldom more than 11
metres in length. But its interior design does not differ. For instance, this holds
true of the placing of the hearth, of the equal distance between posts supporting
the roof, of the bamboo ceiling covering about half the room, of half-partitions
from bamboo and in some cases mud, of store-rooms in the far end of the house,
accessible through an inner door.

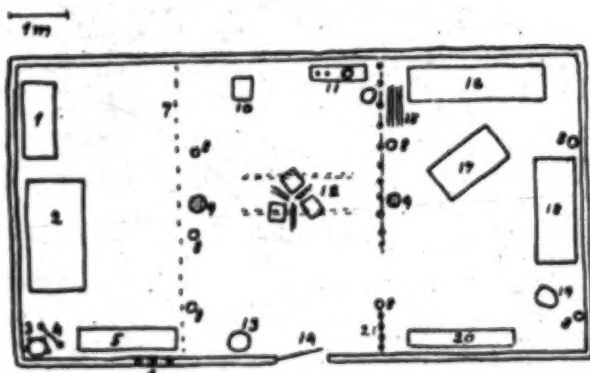
[513] In an *ikoma* I have never seen more than one hearth, which means that the
house is inhabited by one woman. A house in the village of Kikota presented an
example of the peculiar tradition of the peoples of the Highlands, viz. the tying
of the cattle to posts in the dwelling-houses. My drawings are all from the High-
lands, where, in the *ikibaga*, as also noted by Fülleborn, the same tradition is

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

BISGAARD

House-Types of the Nyakyusa

59



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Iaelina's house. 1, cupboard with shelves; 2, children's bed; 3, hen's nest; 4, ladder; 5, roost; 6, barred window; 7, from dotted line towards the right is the bamboo ceiling; 8, from here issue 5 horizontal bamboo sticks on which the bamboo ceiling is supported; 9, Posts supporting roof; 10, chair; 11, low shelf with two bamboo jars and a water jar; 12, hearth with three hearthstones and sticks under ceiling for carrying the fine basket, and corn-cobs hung up to dry, etc.; 13, beer jar; 14, door; 15, mats behind the low partition; 16, shelf for domestic utensils; 17, child's bed; 18, Iaelina's bed; 19, baskets; 20, domestic utensils; 21, low partition between rooms.

found. In the front part of the Kikola house, serving as an entrance room, were four posts called *fikingi*, to which two cows were tied at night.

This part, which we may call the cowhouse, also housed hen's nests, the roost, and the mortar to be used for maize, etc. [231]

The hearth, consisting of one square and two round hearthstones, was placed in the centre of the living-room part. Here were also water jars and the woman's bed. This means that even if this type of house had a roof of a different shape and was always provided with a verandah with posts supporting its roof, the interior was really designed on the same lines as the short *ikibaga*, but it was meant to house only one woman, or one man, as we shall see below. [354] [592]

We may imagine that one of the reasons why the type of roof was changed, was the weakness of the pointed roof of the *ikibaga*. It could often be seen to have a tendency to fall in, and had to be supported by a post. Even in Fülleborn's illustrations, e.g. plate 64 c, a kind of reinforcement can be seen at the edge of the roof. No doubt the roof of the *ihema* does not suffer to the same extent from this flaw. 342 178

New houses were being built to this design, and I suppose that a little more than half the number of the houses were of the *ikibaga* type, and a little than half the *ihema*. 342

In the village of Ilo, I surveyed three houses belonging to one family, a [361]

13:Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

Some Field Notes on the Nyakyusa

67

when we went to a field I saw a stick of a special type upright in the soil. It was made of a reed split at the top, with a small bundle of leaves squeezed in the split. A piece of bark stood out from this bundle. I asked the chief for the significance of this and he explained that it was an *ulusingo*, i. e. a tabu sign to prevent anyone from stepping on the field which was an *imasibi* (yam-field). This sign was believed to possess "magical power", to strike an invader with illness. Each owner of a field has the right to protect his field in such a manner, and a chief especially has the right to command tabus regarding plants which are staple food for the whole chieftainship, as, for instance, maize that is not allowed to be reaped before the chief has given his permission. All such tabus are also named *mwiko*²². During the time of such a general tabu, visitors, who by chance come through a village under tabu, are not allowed to greet the inhabitants of the village or to speak to them. [574]

The chief added that special watchmen are installed during these periods; these men are dressed in a terrifying manner, and have the right to arrest any person transgressing the tabu. The chief may punish the offenders immediately, imposing on them, for instance, a cow as a fine. This was also the case with an ordinary theft in a field, but nowadays such affairs are regulated by the law of the Mandated Government. After the repeal of such a general tabu by the chief, beer will be drunk (e. g. *ubwalwa bwa kutagila bwa kutondelo*, the beer that is poured out at the harvest), and the usual eating community of men will be re-established, for Nyakyusa men like to eat together as comrades, not in families. [178]

10. When I was in Katumba, dances were held on several days from the afternoon till midnight, very similar in form to that which Mackenzie describes (p. 160) by the name *Ikimbimbi*. 535

The men stood on one side of the open place in several lines, with sticks in their hands; on the opposite side were the women and girls. Between them, more in the background, were the drummers, at the beginning of the dance; then they moved round the place. The principal drummer was a man of great excitability. He performed most extravagant movements with his body and his drumstick, making somersaults, jumping over the drum, treating it as a "living being", running to it and turning just in front of it.

²² This word *mwiko* (forbidden) has the same wide (profane and ritual) meanings as *tapu* or *tabu* in the Polynesian Languages (cf. Rud. Lehmann: Die polynesischen Tabu-Sitten. Staatl. Forschungsinstitut für Völkerkunde I, 18; Leipzig 1930).

grubbing for food outside the stable. Old people also eat the meat of apes (*salila*, ape) and of jakal (*ingebe*). The Nyakyusa men are generally very fond of eating fowl, indeed: "Wakugana inyama *sya inguku*", they are fond of the flesh of fowl. 262
[192]

Bones are usually given to the children for gnawing. Eight to ten boys may be seen sitting in a circle and alternately gnaw on the same bone, often drinking a little milk (*ulukama*) the while.

During a boating on Lake Nyasa I saw the well-known columnar clouds formed by the so-called Kungu-flies in the distance above the surface of the water. These flies are also eaten by the peoples on the shore of the Lake. When these insects come shore-wards they are caught, roasted at home and then eaten. But I was told that sometimes they are also caught and eaten out on the Lake, being squeezed into lumps between the hands. [136]
[252]

The Nyakyusa eat with the right hand, but when the meal consists of such food as boiled maize and beans (*ingate*) they also use spoons (*uluiko*) made of folded strips of banana leaves. Nowadays, however, tin spoons and tin plates have come into wide use. The ancient eating mats (*akatefu*, diminutive of *urutefu*) are also being more and more displaced. 264
[412]
[178]
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When the meal is over, the vessels and plates are cleaned with the fingers, bent inward, and then licked off. The mouth is rinsed out with water.

10. Diet. The vegetable diet is roughly the following. The light meal in the morning consists mostly of boiled maize-cobs (*ingate*), sweet potatoes (*imbatata*), bananas (*ilitoki*, pl. *amatoki*), roasted bananas; or, *amawifu*, sweet bananas. The main meal in the evening, shortly before sunset, usually consists of flour porridge (*ikiyindi*), beans (*indima*), both often boiled together with maize, peas (*efinyaga*) very often in the form of porridge, maize-corns (*ikirombe*) and groundnuts (*isya-bala*, pl. *amesyabala*). These groundnuts are dried in the sun on mats. Bananas, if dried in the same manner, are usually halved lengthwise and spread out sometimes on banana leaves. I have seen this done in the village of Katunba. Granary stores are very often, e. g. near Uten-gule (on the border of Nyakyusa and Safwa culture), erected on platforms supported by poles. The container is a big quadrangular basket, roughly three by three meters in length and 1 m in height. The roof has the shape of a large Chinese hat and can be taken off from the lower part of the granary. 262
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262 The tender leaves of pumpkins and taro plants (*amasimbi*, leaves of taro), as well as of a number of other plants growing wild (*indeke*) are also used as vegetables. This food is called *iseke*, a word denoting all sorts of green vegetables.

[278] In his treatise on "The Land Rights of Individuals among the Nyakyusa" (The Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 1; 1938, p. 43). G. Wilson points out that the fruit of the so — called *unsyunguti* — tree is "both delicious to eat and also full of seeds which are dried and crushed for ointment (*inyemba*)", but he adds that he had been unable to find out the botanical name of this useful tree. Perhaps the following passage in the article of Dr. Kerr Cross ("Notes on the Country Lying between Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika"; Proc. Roy. Geogr. Inst. N.S. Vol. XIII, 1891, p. 98) may be helpful in this connection: "There is a tree of the sycamore family which grows extensively all over the north of the lake called *mwisyungute* by the natives which might be developed. It is a most picturesque tree which produces a food, an oil, and a dye. The oil or fat, when cool, is solid, even at a tolerably high temperature, and is like beeswax. It burns well as a night-light, and with wax might be made into candles. In a rude way I have made candles of it. It might also make an excellent soap."

273 [272] As an adjunct to these foods curdy milk (*ulukama ulukafu*) is very much esteemed², to say nothing of the various types of beer, mostly prepared from millet for the men. Large fields of millet are, therefore, to be seen everywhere in the land of the Nyakyusa. On one occasion I attended a beer drink in the hut of a chief. The conduct of the natives present, the chief and his advisers (*amafumu*), was in every respect praise-worthy. Pleasant and interesting stories were narrated. Not infrequently the invitation of a commoner who has had some differences with his chief or one of the *amafumu* to such a feast is regarded as a gesture of reconciliation.

243 [574] As in the time of Sir H. H. Johnston so also to-day "all the ooxymeadows are planted with rice." A traveller coming from the hilly region to the north on nearing Lake Nyasa is struck by numerous large fields of rice in the plain at the northern end of the lake.

● 178 11. Crafts. Mackenzie (1925) is certainly justified in complains of the decay of the arts and crafts among the Nyakyusa. The Indian and European influence is to be seen everywhere in the deterioration and final dissolution of these branches of the ancient culture of the Nyaky-

² A. Wilson, Introduction, p. 255.

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

Notes on the daily life of the Nyakyusa

145

usa. It is true that one still meets blacksmiths on the outskirts of the villages or some distance away from them (as in the case of the Ndali tribe, western to the Nyakyusa area), but they no longer smelt the iron from ore mined by themselves as in former times. The smith of to-day remelt only scrap iron from disused motor-cars and other machines into tools, hatches, and spear-heads, unless, of course, the natives prefer to buy imported iron-ware. As with the Chaga, also the Nyakyusa smith can only be persuaded to submit to being photographed after long negotiation and a change into better clothes. The blacksmiths I met in the Bundali Mountains, however, made no objections whatever to being photographed at their work. Also women were allowed to attend. But one feature of the ancient Nyakyusa blacksmith's culture has been preserved till the present day: the lower part of the bellows through which the air blast is driven into the fire is still made of wood. This feature has been defined by H. Baumann as an element of the "ancient nigritic culture".

12. Dress. The cloths of the Nyakyusa have changed to a very considerable degree since the beginning of European influence. A comparison of the earliest pictures and descriptions of inhabitants at the northern end of Lake Nyasa with the dress of modern times brings out this point most forcibly. Originally the Nyakyusa went almost naked, adorned only with rings and belts, but nowadays all degrees of compromise with European fashions of dress are to be found, especially near the European settlements and Mission Stations. The most conservative element are, in this case, the women. It is still possible to-day to observe in each village the preparation of the long strips of bark (*elyabi*, pl. *amabi*) commonly worn by the women. The so-called *impandapanda* (Fotheringham: *mlambe*) tree furnishes the dress material. After the bark has been immersed in water, the bast is beaten with wooden instruments and then pulled off from the harder parts of the bark. These tools are like hammers; the flat end of such an implement is furrowed, sometimes with a disk made of horn, and as it produces patters on the bast it is called "*obosimbe*", that which produces patters. These long belts, almost reaching the ground, especially in front, are mostly ruby coloured, but the women sitting in front of their huts manufacture also other types with geometrical (triangular) patterns in yellow and brown forming only girdles (*umpango*). In addition to this minimum requirement in the way of dress some women around the waist also wear copper belts (*manyeta*), made of thin copper-wire, spirally wound on a core of hairs from the tails of cows. These